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Publisher: Philip Kerr
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Victorian Office: Joanne Lockart 0831 9529 2011
Circulation Manager: Paul Fox
Accounts: Theo Fatseas
Subscriptions: Rachel Pirie
Contributors: Eliot Fish,
Max Antolead, Vito Katsenopoulos,
Tim Levy, Mark Stephano,
Russell Hopkinson, Ross Clarksmith
Printed by: Wilke Colour
Separations by: Prestige Colour
Distribution by: NBD Ph. 9351 9911
All copyrights reserved by
Next Publishing Pty Ltd
M/N 002 642 645
ISSN 1320 7456
WHOLE TO WHOLE
PO Box 634,
Strawberry Hills, NSW 2012
Fax: 1021 9310 1315
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E-mail: freaks@next.com.au

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Goodbye Longterm - hello Freakometer, Phantasmagoria 2 gets classification, Interview with SCE President - Chris Deering, Cyberpet and Star Wars desktop thingies, and news on Nintendo's performance in the US.

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This month we give away KKND, Flying Corps, Cricket 97, Takeru, Soul Blade, Microsoft goodies, and more!

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Beamers Dan Toose pops down to Melbourne and takes a look at our biggest and longest lived software developers, Beam International.

Hype It Up

Well, by now lots of you Nintendo freaks will be going hard on your **Nintendo 64s...** and lots of you won't. We've got reviews of four more N64 titles, including the long awaited **Shadows of the Empire: Killer Instinct Gold**, and the extremely spiffy new 1st person shooter, **Turok - Dinosaur Hunter**. The first part of our **Super Mario 64 playguide** is also in this month's issue, so the Nintendo heads have plenty to gawk at...

Nameo comes back with yet another 3D fighting game, **Soul Blade**, which rocks pretty darn hard. PlayStation owning sports fans have something to dribble over, with **Total NBA 97's** release, and another Sony sequel comes in the form of **Twisted Metal 2**.

Those of you out in Saturn land who have been hanging for your first chance to play a Sonic game on your 32 bit beastie will be a bit bleary-eyed at **Sonic 3D Blast**, which really has to make one wonder why they halted work on **Sonic X-Treme** to convert this Mega Drive game... truly bizarre. Something to smile about though is **Die Hard Arcade**, which is a pretty cool, 3D beat 'em up.

We test run the Doomy adventure game, **Realms of the Haunting**, which is a little bit different to everything else we've seen of late. For the real time strategy nuts, we finally get **KKnD**, developed by **Beam**, whom we've done a feature on this month, talking to them about what goes on in the game development business, and stuff.

There's also a couple of changes and new bits in Hyper now, which hopefully will help make the mag a little bit more informative, useful, and fun for y'all. Enough of my yakkin', whatdaya say? Let's boogie!

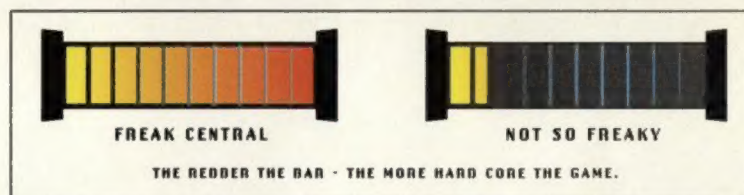
Dan

Ch-ch-ch-changes...

Okay, last issue we did a bit of a review of the scoring system so the marks wouldn't be so high. That may not have been so obvious, since we got truckloads of fantastic games last issue, so this issue the effect will be a little more noticeable (still good games, just not as many Earth shattering ones).

Scoring has had another facelift this issue, just like we suggested it might do so last time around. We say goodbye to the Longterm score, which was really the only score that we had to "take a guess at", since the only way we could tell you how long a game will remain fun is to simply keep playing it till it's no longer fun, and that will more often than not take longer than it does to do an issue. So rather than give you a number which is just a guess, we thought it better we just tell you if a game is too short, or if it's really long, and let it affect the overall score of the game.

No, this isn't an attempt for us to have to write one less category, because while Longterm is out, the Freakometer is in! A complaint that we sometimes get is that we give a game a good score, which inspires someone to go out and buy a game. The game's fine, but unfortunately it's not suited to the gamer, and thus you end up with a disgruntled gamer who's out of pocket, and that's not something we want. To give you a clearer idea of what the game is like, we've included the Freakometer, which is not a score, but an indicator of just how much the game is orientated towards the hard core freaks out there. In Byte Size we simply call it "Freakiness", since there's no room for the funky little meter, and the number just being a representation of how hard core it is, NOT a score.



That's about all that's gonna change in scoring... we don't want to disorientate you so much as to make you too dizzy or anything like that. There is however a new addition to Hyper, that has nothing to do with the reviews... it's a comic. Oliver Errington, one of the Motor Toon drawing comp winners, will now be doing a new half page comic strip called Random Access, which we'll be running at the beginning of the letters section. Just a little extra something for you to look forward to each month.

For those of you that don't bother reading Overflow, make sure you do, since we'll be announcing any corrections on previous boo-boo's we've made there (like the release date for Mario Kart 64). Better to admit a mistake and set it straight rather than dismiss it. There's also an announcement at the beginning of cheats, and letters, relevant to those to areas, which should hopefully save some of you some time and stress.

This section will be back to normal next issue, with a lead news piece.

And now... for some winners...

Competition Winners

Cool Boardin

Joe Theodorsen (WA)
Chris Johnson (WA)
Liam Hogan (NSW)
Geoff Cockerill (SA)
Cody Deatker (SA)

Donkey Kong 3

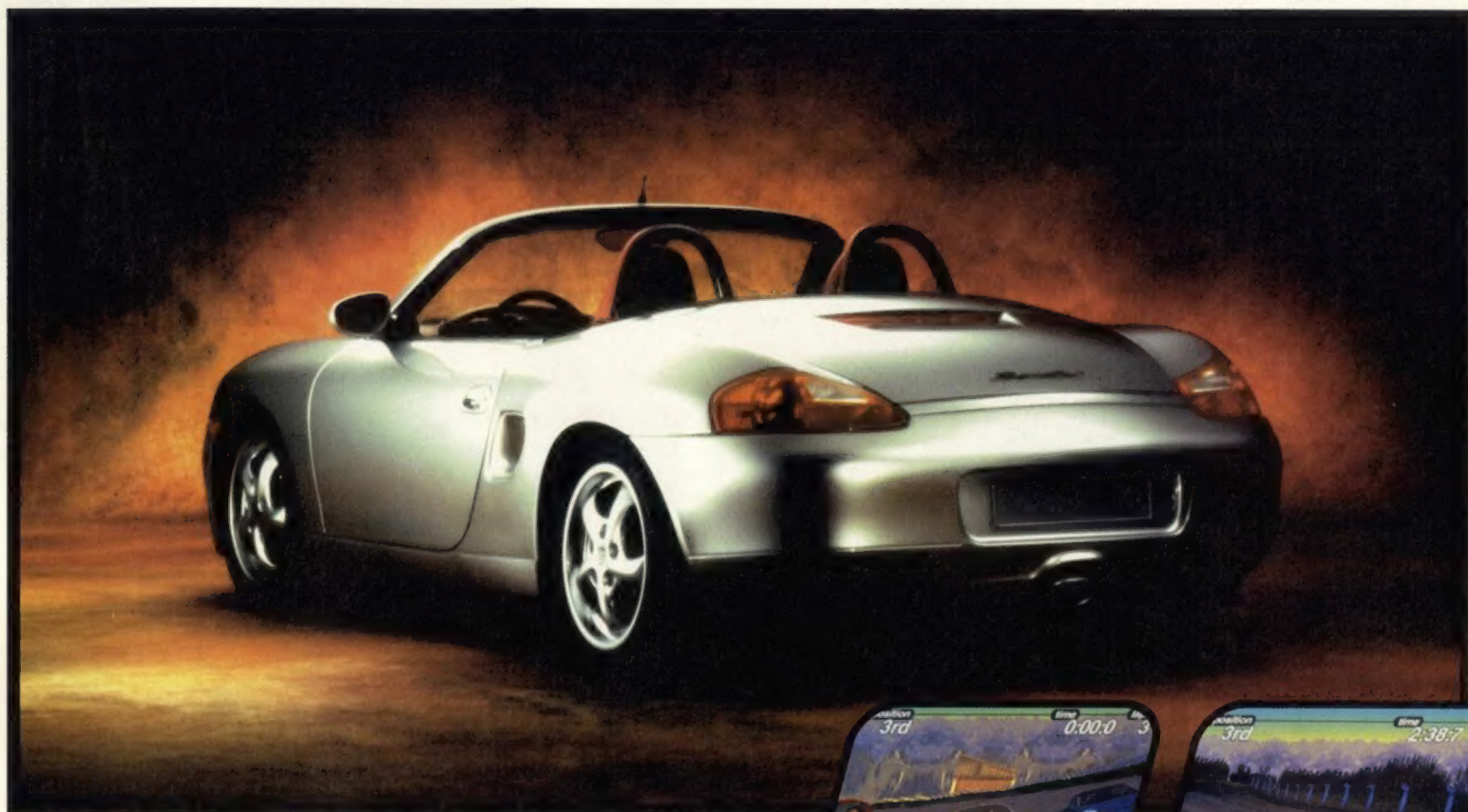
Benjamin Tortora (NSW)
Aimee Rogers (SA)
Michelle Landriat (QLD)
Krishan Sharma (QLD)

Daytona

Kit Webster (VIC)
Clinton Waters (NSW)
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Desktop Wars

Funny how we're seeing a bunch of Star Wars stuff coming up all of a sudden isn't it? Might have something to do with the re-release of the movies perhaps? The big titles are Dark Forces 2, and X Wing Vs. Tie Fighter, but there's always room for more when it comes to Star Wars, right? Well here's one that could be the bane of all bosses whose staff is comprised of Star Wars fans, because LucasArts' new title, Yoda Stories, is the ideal game for someone to get that quick one hour gaming fix out of their system. You play as Luke Skywalker (hopefully there'll be another game where you get to play someone a bit cooler, like Han Solo or Boba Fett), receiving guidance from the wise mystic pygmy thing.. Yoda, who sets you off on your way against the forces of the Empire. As you can see, the game is rather simplistic, but this simply makes it ideal for those times you know you're not going to have time to play much. Fortunately the game has good replay value, since it randomly recreates new quests for you to complete. If the whole thing isn't appealing enough for some of you Star Wars freaks, maybe having a "behind the scenes" bit on the special edition Star Wars movies will help convince you to get this one.

D.T

An Alternative to Catz & Dogz

When we all first saw the Dogz interactive pet, all that could be heard for days was "Aaaawww", as the femmes here at Next Media all fell victim to the immense cuteness of it all, as did many women from around the globe (Take note geeky boys, that could be your ticket). Then, almost predictably, we saw Catz, catering to those of us that prefer animals that clean themselves as opposed to those that drink from the toilet. This however left some disgruntled folks that loathe cute, aimless little bits of fluff... those that yearned for something... unnatural.

Eureka, Cyberpest is here, and is the epitome of aimless, freaky fun for those that want to do something useless with their time... like office workers whose screens can't be seen by their boss, students that want their parents to believe they're doing homework, etc. The pest has its personality determined by the hour of day you allow the thing to infest your machine. From there you shape the way it feels and behaves.

Straight away your pest gets straight to work, pissing on the carpet, and promptly struts around waiting for you to do something. If you're not quick enough, he'll just start dragging things off the shelves, to either play with, consume, or simply destroy. A common way for your pest to show what it thinks of something is to piss or crap on it. While your pest is considerably more troublesome than the half hearted Catz and Dogz out there, you have the tools required to exact revenge on your pet for its behaviour. Forget the water squirter, grab your trusty double barreled shotgun and make 'em eat lead. You can also just hit another button which electrifies the critter, or another one to feed it. Too much food will cause your pest to explode in a shower of intestines and other unattractive organs.

*To help justify the whole thing to your parents, or your boss... There's the ability to teach your pest to respond to commands, and also a bunch of virtual experts for you to call, who will inform you on your pet's performance, and will recommend what you can do to get the best (or worst) from your yellow sidekick. So there's a psychological element to it all... kind of. Bah! It's just a bit of fun.

D.T

overflow

More on Hexen... Although the lack of any titles thus far has caused a bit of a lack of faith in the Saturn's Net-Link hardware, Saturn Hexen has been reported to have multiplayer facilities, which hopefully is some inspiring news on the development of the first titles that will cater for multiplayer online gaming for Saturn. Sega will announce its plans in this area over the next few months.

For those of you out there that are wondering why people would get so psyched about playing a first person shooter on a console, since there's no practical way to play multiplayer... think again. Hexen 64 is going to allow for up to four players to go at it at once, all on the one screen. Before any of you ask if the game is going to suffer any because of that, the only thing confirmed at this stage is that the backgrounds will be 3D, textured, polygons... and the monsters will be 2D sprites (essentially the PC version, but with better backgrounds). Should be a big 'un.

Want to hear something really funny?

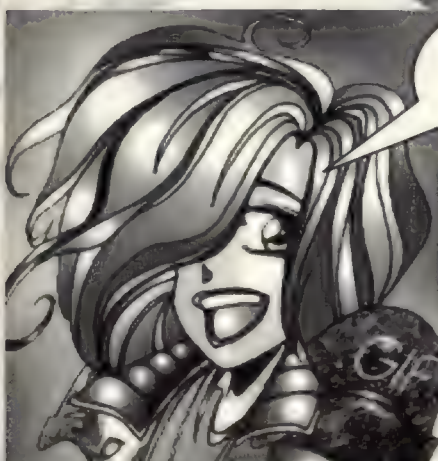
The SPA (Software Publishers Association) announced their nominations for the Codies award (Sort of the video game equivalent of the Oscars) in the action category:

Assassin 2015, Hunter Hunted, Descent 2, Rebel Assault 2, and Shattered Steel. It seems rather ridiculous that games such as Duke Nukem 3D, Quake, Tomb Raider and the like were left out of this list. It would seem the Codies seem to have the same amount of credibility as the Oscars... Wonder who's taking who to lunch?

An apology to both Nintendo and the general public. Amidst a loud blast of the Prodigy, Dan misheard George's question about the release date of Mario Kart 64... and told him March 1st. The game may not end up shipping till August over here. Shame, looks great.

For those of you unaware, Intel have released their MMX processor chips, which essentially are just the standard Pentium chips, with 57 new instructions built in, which help speed up all your processing. The thing is though, if a program/game has been optimised for MMX, and it is used on a computer with an MMX chip, it will make a much bigger difference. The areas that will really be bolstered are sound and graphics, which of course are the things that put your processor through the ringer the most when it comes to gaming. The chips cost about 10% more than the old Pentium chips, but are well worth the small difference.

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Phantasmagoria 2 Survives the Horrors of Censorship Review

Here's a bit of news that can really only be considered positive. There has been a rather major stink kicked up since the first Phantasmagoria game was rejected by the Australian OFLC (Office of Film & Literature Classification), with the Australian public being a tad miffed to say the least that firstly, a game was banned within the country, and secondly that there was no development of an R classification for the Australian video game market, which really means not even consenting adults, (whom, let's face it, are either going to be mentally screwed up or not, and a video game won't make the difference) could get their mitts on it. Well, Phantasmagoria 2 has been put through its paces a couple of times by the OFLC, and lo and behold... it has made it through!

After adjustments to only a couple of excessive scenes (nothing that will affect gameplay or the overall effect of the game), the long awaited game is actually going to make it out on our shelves in no time at all.

The game itself looks to be one of the most ambitious adventure games yet. Imagine Darkseed 2, except a squillion times better. None of this poorly digitised human characters shuffling about over an artist drawn background. Phantasmagoria is all done from proper video, on proper sets, with actors that are a hell of a lot more convincing than your average video game ring in. Sure, it's all a bit over the top, but it's over the top in a good way. To put it in a genre, one would have to say it's a horror title, with lots of saucy bits on top, which always make a very amusing combination. How horrific? Pretty damn horrific, which is why it's such a breakthrough with this one getting the nod from the OFLC. Perhaps this heralds a more open line of thinking from the OFLC, and one can only hope it'll lead to an R classification, which of course would mean there would no longer be a question of wether or not a game would come out in Australia, it would simply be a case of wether you need to be 18 or over to buy it.

Being spread over five CDs, you're looking at a lot of gameplay. And will be one of the bigger titles up for review next issue.

D. T

Nintendo Riding High on U.S. Success

The long delays suffered by gamers waiting to get their hands on the N64 seem to have increased interest in the system rather than turn people off. According to U.S. company NPD Research Nintendo gathered 44% of all console games industry revenues during the December/January period compared with Sony's 28% and Sega's 26%! On top of that the five top selling games for December in the U.S. were all Nintendo -three for the N64 and two for the SNES. They were, in order: Mario64, DKC3, Shadows of the Empire, DK2 and Killer Instinct Gold.

To make matters worse for Sony and Sega news has just come to light that the Nintendo's N64DD recordable drive peripheral will also come with a built in modem and internet software (probably on ROM) specifically designed for multiplayer gaming, making it the first console game system capable of

competing with the PC in this area. Well not exactly, Sega have actually released the Saturn's internet add-on in the States but have failed Saturn owners and themselves miserably by not producing any games that use it. Consequently the device has proved to be about as popular as a truck full of rednecks at the gay mardi gras and looks like dissapearing completely before it gets a local release. Nintendo aren't making that mistake though and the first game to take advantage of the N64DD's multiplayer capabilities will probably be Epic Megagames "Unreal" A Quake style first person shooter due for release sometime during our winter and others are slated to follow soon after. Of course we'll keep you posted on developments, 'cause we love you guys.

G. S



UPTempo 3
AIR MAX

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A LITTLE OF THAT AND A WHOLE LOT OF
THE GOOD STUFF, SCOTTIE PIPPIN
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ITS HIGH-WRAPPING MIDSOLE PROVIDES
INCREDIBLE LATERAL SUPPORT WHEN HE'S
CUTTING, PIVOTING OR SPRINTING
HIS WAY TO THE HOOP.



HERE IS A GLIMPSE AT TENKEN 3, STILL ABOUT A YEAR AWAY FOR THE PLAYSTATION.

Wanna run for President?

I certainly didn't, I just caught a cab. Once in a while one of the really big wigs from overseas rocks into Australia (or jazzs', or classicals, or whatever International Corporation Presidents do), and this time around Chris Deering, the President of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (In terms of the video game market, we are a part of Europe due to our PAL format TVs), strolled into Sydney, and we were fortunate enough to be able to have a chat with Mr Deering, and get the word from the top on what's happening with the PlayStation.

DT: Sometimes we see long delays in PAL releases of PlayStation games that have been developed on NTSC systems is this something we could see changing in the future?

CD: The game is usually written in NTSC for the Japanese or US markets. Even in Europe when we write games - Psygnosis writes games, Sony writes games - they tend to be written in NTSC. There are things that can be done in the process of writing the game which will enhance the speed of which the conversions to PAL can be done and on certain types of games, like Tekken, fighting games in particular can be converted very quickly. There is a delay, but on average that lag is not more than 6-8 weeks. It probably will come down a bit, because of more experiments.

DT: It's obvious that one of the PlayStation's greatest assets is its strong lineup of software developers supporting the system. Will we be seeing any games developed by Sony themselves?

CD: Sony has, as part of its family, ten programming teams in Japan, and in the States, there's about eight. In London, we have four. We overlay that with Psygnosis, putting out somewhere around twenty games a year. In-house developed games - NBA 96 was done in London, there's an upgrade of that coming shortly, on top of that, there's Force Challenge, we have a game called Rapid Racer, in the vein of Wave Racer but with more white water and ski boats and it looks very good. The US guys have come up with Twisted Metal World Tour, Jet Rider, their own NFL Game Day 97 and they have a number of other projects. We want the platform to be open, we want to have a favourable profit environment for the publishers of games to be able to expect a return on their investment. We don't really want to be competing with them, but we do a certain number of games to stay current with the machine. We've had some successes and some not so successes, but there's plenty of software coming from Sony itself.

DT: Are there any recent acquisitions of developers by Sony we could expect good things from?

CD: There was an announcement last week in Japan by Enix - the company that makes Driving Quest which has sold over 10 or 12 million units of Driving Quest over its life in 16 bits etc. They announced they would be supporting PlayStation in order to take advantage of the disc headroom. That piece of news, combined with the news about Squaresoft and Final Fantasy 7,

is something of which the PlayStation team in Japan are very proud. I think it will direct the course of the future for quite sometime. As far as great games from any source coming out next year, certainly Tomb Raider which is a great game out now, there will be a sequel to that from Eidos. There's some great games coming from Namco which we will have on our system. Time Crisis I think will be huge; Rage Racer has sold a huge number in Japan already, then there's Tekken 3 probably a year away. Fox is working on a title called the X-Files which is looking pretty good. Jurassic Park from Greenworks SKG will be an exclusive on PlayStation, at least for quite some time. There's a Disney title in development to match up to their new movie Hercules which will come out maybe about Christmas time.. Psygnosis has a great title called G-Police in the works. Tenka, which is a Doom type game; Riot which is a pitball type game and of course Formula 1 Part 2. And another soccer game. There's quite a bit, I'm not sure I've covered them all, but those are the ones that come to mind.

DT: Any news on a modem or Internet facility for PlayStation?

CD: A part of the network owns a product, the Black PlayStation, which has a feature whereby you can use an Internet connection in conjunction with a PC. It's a developer's hobbyist tool and game code can be transmitted from a PC modem to another fan or even to us for evaluation. There are no plans at this stage to do the kind of thing that Sega has on their Saturn. There are indeed explorations, but up to now, the resolution you can get on a TV screen from Web browsers - there's something called WebTV which does it pretty well - are not selling more than the initial wave of hobbyists who've bought it. It's under consideration, and it is obviously possible.

DT: Our readers constantly ask about PlayStation 2, is there anything you can tell us about plans for the next Sony console?

CD: There is a big R and D group in Japan, who obviously invented PlayStation 1. There is a lot of cost reduction engineering going on, work on new controllers and other features to enhance the current system. I'm not aware of any specific definition of a new console or the specs of any upgraded product or successor product, but if and when something like that does come along, it probably won't be until the time of the Olympics. There's plenty of room left in the PlayStation for a lot more growth.

IN SUMMARY:

- * NTSC to PAL delays should shorten
 - * For those that accuse Sony of simply making a console and not writing games for it themselves, there's actually quite a few SCE developed titles
 - * Sony is not making a concerted effort to get an Internet peripheral for the PSX, most likely due to lack of inspiring feedback for the Saturn's existing equivalent.
 - * Probably no PlayStation No.2 till the year 2000.
- Should have an informed run down on the black PlayStation soon (once Sony release some official info on the PAL version).

charts

SATURN

1. Tomb Raider
2. Virtua Cop 2
3. Street Fighter Alpha 2
4. Daytona Championship
5. Command & Conquer
6. Fighting Vipers
7. Virtual On
8. Sea Bass Fishing
9. Nights
10. Alien Trilogy

PLAYSTATION

1. Tomb Raider
2. Destruction Derby 2
3. Pandemonium
4. Crash Bandicoot
5. Command & Conquer
6. Tekken 2
7. NBA Live '97
8. Tobal No.1
9. Die Hard Trilogy
10. Soviet Strike

PC CD ROM

1. Diablo
2. Red Alert
3. Cricket '97
4. Prviateer 2
5. Syndicate Wars
6. Tomb Raider
7. Heroes of Might & Magic 2
8. Masters of Orion 2
9. Destruction Derby 2
10. Discworld 2

MEGA DRIVE

1. Worms
2. NBA live '97
3. FIFA '97
4. NHL '97
5. Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3
6. Andretti Racing
7. Brian Lara Cricket
8. ARL '96
9. Madden '97
10. Toy Story

SNES

1. Yoshi's Island
2. Super Star Wars
3. Sim City 2000
4. NBA Live '97
5. Donkey Kong Country 3
6. Terranigma
7. Super Mario Kart
8. Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3
9. Earthworm Jim 2
10. Cannon Fodder

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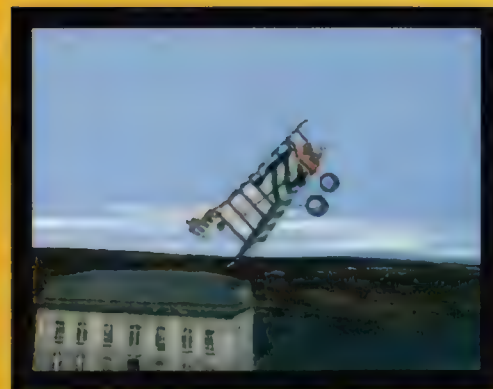
Krush Kill N Destroy

Australian software fiends Beam have a hot piece of product called KKND and those splendid people at EA have sent us six copies to give away. You can get your hot piece on it by answering this ridiculously hard question:

If $X=3.675$ and $Y=X/X+(X-4)$ and $Z=X+Y/(X-Y)$ then what does KKND stand for?

Send your answers to:

KKND All Spice Girls fans, HYPER, PO Box 634, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012



On a Wing and a Prayer

Flying Corps is a spiffy new WWI flight sim developed by Empire interactive. Spunky graphics and a super realistic flight model make this a boffins delight and thanks to the generous people at Playcorp we have three copies of the game to give away. The first winner drawn will also get a Thrustmaster 'Fighter X' joystick! If you can answer this question:

What colour was Manfred von Richthofen's Aircraft???

Send your answers to:

What A Fokker

HYPER

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This Game's Got Balls

More goodies from Electronic Arts, aren't you lucky. Cricket '97 is the best sports sim yet from our own Beam Software and we've got six of 'em to give away. But wait, there's more. The first very lucky winner will also get an exceedingly spiffy black suede biker style jacket!. Just answer this easy question and you might get lucky:

In the 1968 Australian tour of Zimbabwe batsman Bob Simpson scored the highest number of runs in the team. How many stumps was he standing in front of when he did it?

Send your answers to:

Suede Balls

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Takeru Dude of Death

The best interactive Anime yet seen on the PC. Takeru got Dan all excited, especially the nude scenes, and he'll get you all excited too (Takeru, not Dan). The dazzling people at Network Entertainment have decided to let you in on the deal by giving us four copies to pass on to our dear readers. All you have to do is answer the following question:

What country did Manga and Anime originate from? And what is the name of its' current Minister for Public Works? (Only kidding about the second bit, he)

Send your answers to:

Dude of Death, HYPER, PO Box 634, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012



What other fighting games has Namco developed for the PSX? (one name will do)

Ah! Soul, HYPER, PO Box 634, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012



Microsoft are trying to make us happy so they've offered to give us thirty CD's which include demo versions of games like Diablo, Monster Truck Madness, War Wind and other stuff like the complete Internet Explorer 3.0. Also, just to really suck up to us, they've offered to give the first ten winners an upgrade copy of Win95 too. Answer the following question and you could score:

Demo Disc Thingy, HYPER, PO Box 634, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

Oops!

In the last issue we announced the ten winners for the PSX version of NASCAR racing - Unfortunately the release of this title has been delayed slightly so if you haven't received your prize yet, please be patient. It's supposed to be available by the end of March and we'll try and get it to you ASAP. We also apologise profusely to other prize winners who have waited patiently for their stuff. We've had a few problems getting hold of the games and with losing addresses and such, things get a bit chaotic here at times and hopefully everything will sort itself out soon. He he.

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BY MAX AUTOHEAD

You're Under Arrest 3 & 4

Love's Highway Stars & On the road again

We'll, in the first two episodes I reviewed of YOU'RE UNDER ARREST, I held off giving this series the perfect ten. Surely this series couldn't maintain the level of quality in both execution of the animation and script writing, could it? Oh yes it can!

Cheesy? That it's got in spades. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST is about a police precinct of traffic cops in Tokyo. Centring on two main female characters, Officers Natsumi and Miyuki, ARREST is possibly the freshest animated sit-com available at the moment.

YUA is how anime should be; good attention to script and detail. As stated before on previous reviews, the mechanical designs in YUA are outstanding, and rivals animes such as Ghost in the Shell and Akira in execution. The characters are "REAL" living in a real environment, and you get a sense that they are people, rather than drawings to help progress the plot.

Episode three and four had me rolling on the floor in stitches, and as Eddie Murphy would say, this series has the "Two drops of pee Guarantee!". If you haven't seen arrest then your missing one of the best Animes ever. Possibly the animated series of '97.

If you liked animes like Giant Robo and Ranma then you'll love "You're Under Arrest.". Doesn't have the same sort of impact as Akira for example, but this IS a TV series and is scored as one.

10/10

RATED PG. DISTRIBUTED BY MADMAN AND SIREN ENTERTAINMENT.



Junk Boy

OHHHHHKAY. Junk Boy.

"Ryohei Yamazaki is a cool twenty three year old, with an extremely high sex drive".

That folks, just about explains the whole plot of Junk Boy, the latest anime release from Manga video. See Ryohei (Junk Boy) just can't control the frequency of his erections. A huge lump grows in his pants every time he gets turned on, which is about every thirty seconds on a daily basis. See a girl? Bang! It's crotch stretching time.

Junk boys talents are put to good use when he's hired by Potato Boy magazine. His job? To review girlie photo's in his special foolproof style; if the photos cause some groin movement, they pass the test!

Masturbation, brothels, soft porn photos and attempted rape form the backbone of Junk Boy. The animation is ordinary at best, the narrative juvenile and exploitive.

I originally saw the Chinese subtitled version years ago, and must say that the story and quality of Junk Boy failed to get any better in the current translation.

For those of you who are fascinated in Japanese school girl panty vending machines and affiliated merchandise, then this video could be your cup of tea.

Good for a laugh but not much else.

5.5/10

RATED 18 YEARS AND OVER. DISTRIBUTED BY POLYGRAM VIDEO.



Zeram

Gotta love any live action stuff that comes out from the East. Usually, we associate kung fu style sci fi beat 'em up action fests with the stuff that pours out of Hong Kong. Well no more! For the past two years those lovely people at Siren have released what they call "live action Manga!". We've seen the live action version of Tokyo Babylon, we've seen Gunhed in it's ultra trashy post Terminator form, and now, now we have ZERAM!!!

So what is it man? "Zeram is a hideous and terrifying space warrior- unstoppable, relentless, vicious; he is the ultimate ancient bio organic weapon, designed to keep killing until all resistance is destroyed. And now Zeram is headed for earth!"

Holey moley! That sounds pretty bad. Lucky for us, an intergalactic bounty hunter named Iria and a computer called Bob are on a mission to stop Zeram before he starts his impersonation of Martin Bryant on a bad day here on Earth! Them, and two Joe Blows from the local power company are about to have the mother of all battles, as Zeram and his disgusting sidekicks attempt a full on gore fest in an attempt to make you hurl! And hurl you shall!

Zeram has some of the most disgusting special effects this side of Peter Jackson's "Bad Taste". Green Phlegm flies with blood and gore in this truly entertaining weird arse flick. In the wonderful style of Asian Trash Cinema (a term of endearment folks) everything in this film has that kick ass disposable style. Pure mind bubblegum; Turn on, tune in and drop out!

6.5/10

RATED M15+. DISTRIBUTED BY SIREN.



Street Fighter EX Capcom

Street Fighter EX is the latest in the Street fighter series, taking the seminal 2D fighting sim into the 3D realm.

On the surface, the graphics are fairly disappointing and when compared to other latest releases such as Virtua Fighter III and Dead or Alive, it is, well, very Virtua Fighter I. No doubt, this poor graphical representation of the characters we have grown to love has been done on purpose to pave the way for a series of SF EX upgrades.

On the games release, competition has been fierce at the local arcades, with Ken, Ryu and Guile being the favourites to take on a host of new opponents (Skullomania, Dr Dark, C Jack, Pullum) and those other old favourites Chun Lee And Zangief. All the new characters have some pretty cool moves with the highlights being Dr Dark having the ability to drop time bombs and capture opponents in a scorpionesque (see Mortal Kombat) way. Other subjects of interest are that C Jack enjoys the odd game of baseball with an opponents head, and Pullum could very well be the niece or love child of Dahlsim.

So if you have mastered the 2D SF moves then you will have no problem adapting to SF EX. Also stay tuned for the next version as this one (more than likely is simply to whet the appetite.

✕ ✕ ✕

Plus an extra ✕ for being Street Fighter

Scud Racer Sega

Daytona with its infectious title track(dayyyyy-tonnnnnnaaaaaa!!!!) superb graphics, realistic interface, and the ability to have linked play with human players was and still is an all time classic game- and the good news- Scud racer is the super hot upgrade of Daytona. As a matter of fact, Sega may of well called Scud Racer - Daytona II.

One of the new additions is the ability to select 1 of 4 vehicles. The difference in the vehicles is in the handling, top speed and RPM. At first one is not fussed over choosing between a Ferrari F40 or a Dodge Viper, etc. Over time though you'll find the McLaren has way too much over steer (very high adhesion levels means it is hard to drift the car into corners and power out under full throttle), while on the other end, the F40 is able to be thrown round a lot more. The 911 and Viper both tend towards more neutral steering.

The three tracks available (a fourth being the beginner track at night) require different driving styles.. On the expert track, at times you have hardly enough track to take the car to its top speed and end up shuffling through the bottom gears of the 4 speed gear box. The intermediate track allows for some high speed driving and at times one finds the car in a high speed drift. These high speed drifts are what makes Scud Racer truly exceptional as the interface is highly receptive to the most intricate wheel and brake movements. In other words once your vehicle goes into a drift (at 340 kph)one small wrong movement could see your vehicle heading for carnageville and of course a slower lap time. The best way to literally see how your chosen vehicle handles is by doing the first lap from the copter viewpoint, though once the vehicles handling dynamics are mentally recorded then nothing brings you closer to being on that track than by selecting view point 2 which is the interior/dashboard view. Another reality enhancer is the introduction of Direct Rolling Motorised System., which gives the interface a bit of sideways and tilt movement. The optimum racing lines are not always apparent due to barricades seemingly blocking your way- just rammem' down.

The graphics are superb, engine noise (if you can hear it) is most excellent, backgrounds breathtaking, Drive/run /bus /fly /scooter down to the arcade ASAP.

✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕

BY TIM LEVY



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net trawlin'



BY ELLIOT FISH

SNES '96

Just how badly would you want a SNES emulator for your PC? Well, smile, because some geek has made it a reality (though a suspiciously dodgy one). At <http://www.euronet.nl/users/jkoot/index.htm> you can suss out the possibilities of playing SNES games in Windows 95, Linux and Sun Solaris. But do so at your own risk!

GLOBAL GAMING

Linking up to the internet for some multiplayer gaming is fast becoming the ultimate entertainment. Never tried it? Then you should definitely absorb some info at the Online Gaming Planet site. There are links to multiplayer sites, including a hot list of what's "happening" and news, news, news. <http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/8144/> will get you there and get you going.

NOSTRADAMUS

Heard about this creaky old guy from the Sixteenth Century? He predicted the day he was dug up (there was a plaque around his neck!) and the end of the world (we don't have long to go). But what's really quite funny, is that a lot of people seriously believe that he predicted the Intel Pentium Bug back in 1555! The site at <http://www.active-mind.com/80/Mysterious/Topics/Nostradamus/> has translations of the old guy's quatrains for you to mull over. You never know.



EARTH ACADEMY

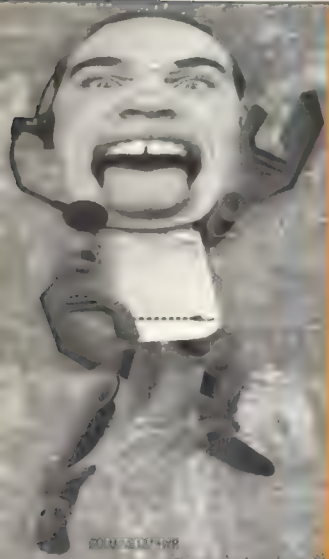
If the VPC isn't specific enough for ya, then all Wing Commander fans can skip the digital swell to <http://www.calisto.com/academy> and drown in WC info. There's stuff on every game from WC1 to the new Privateer 2: The Darkening. Reviews, links to other WC sites and hints and tips for all the missions are just a mouse-click away.

THE 'GNOS

For some hot previews of the year's potential blockbusters, tech-support, "e-clips" and screen grabs galore - check out the legends at Psygnosis (the makers of some very fine video games). While you're there... take a look at their up-coming titles like Zombiville and Rush Hour! <http://www.psygnosis.com/> is where it's at.

AIN'T IT COOL

Here's an absolute bloody legend of the internet who has gone to great lengths to provide the latest rumours, info, detailed sketches and photos from all the secret hot films in development. Find out about the Star Wars Prequels (Ewan McGregor as a young Obi Wan Kenobi?), Alien 4: Ressurrection, James Bond 18, Indiana Jones 4, Speed 2 and Spawn the film. Sneak in at <http://www.sdgweb.com/scifi/coolnews.html> before this guy is arrested!



Go Cyber!

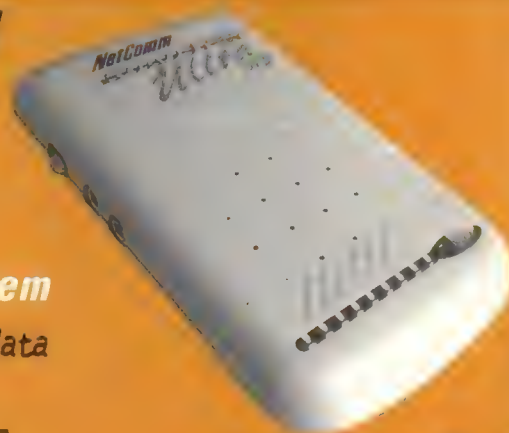
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WIN Turok & a Nintendo 64

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Well, we can't help you with the last one, but we certainly can with the first two. How? Well, if you subscribe this month, you'll have the chance to go in the draw for one of this issue's best games... **Turok Dinosaur Hunter**.

This one's the first person shooter for the Nintendo 64, and is the most outstanding game of it's type on any console.

Before you sulk about not owning a console

to play the game on, we're also giving away a **Nintendo 64**

so you can actually play Turok, rather than just look at the cart in frustration! How can we do this?? All thanks to the boundless generosity of those wonderful people at ROADSHOW INTERACTIVE.

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» Doom 64 Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: JUNE/JULY

CATEGORY: IT'S DOOM!

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

They've got Mario, they've got Star Wars, and apart from a good fighting game what else do those Nintendo people want? Doom of course. Nintendo have been in the business long enough to know that it's the games that sell a console system, not its' mip rating or bus bandwidth and that Doom is one of those games that can sell a lot of systems. Especially when people see how good this version looks! The PSX version of this much loved game didn't quite look as good or play as well as the PC equivalent for some reason. Fortunately the same can't be said for Midway's Nintendo conversion, which really shows the difference in grunt between the two machines. Doom 64 looks better than Quake running on a very fast PC, it is simply gorgeous.

Midway have taken Doom's 2D/3D environment and given it the full 3D treatment a-la Quake. They have also, with a little help from id, designed over 30 new levels for the game and even, heaven forbid, come up with a couple of new monsters and at least one new weapon of destruction. Doom 64 has been redesigned from the ground up to take full advantage of the N64's power. Some of the monsters now change between a solid or translucent state or fade in and out completely and the lighting effects on weapons fire and explosions are fantastic. Hopefully Midway has also found a way to get around the musical limitations of cartridge based systems so that the atmosphere of the game is as immersive as the graphics. Not satisfied with producing what looks to be the best console first person action game ever, the same production team will begin work on Quake 64 as soon as they wrap up the Doom project.



Playstation Update

Playstation



All Sony PlayStation software pricing has been reviewed to make games more accessible to PlayStation owners. All new releases from January 1, 1997 will be priced from \$69.95 to \$89.95rrp. That means BLOCKBUSTER games are cheaper! But it hasn't stopped there. Last month a range of top selling games were re-released by Sony at the excellent price of \$49.95rrp! Known as the Platinum range you can now buy; Destruction Derby, Wipeout, Tekken, Ridge Racer, Battle Arena Toshinden and Air Combat for just \$49.95. With another 30 titles to be released by the end of the year your PlayStation library of games is set to double.

What are platinum games?

All games are proven BLOCKBUSTERS. Platinum games have been available for over a year and over 300,000 people have bought them. That means that these titles are PlayStation favourites and you can be sure you won't be disappointed.

Where can you buy Platinum games?

All specialist games stores and major department stores have the Platinum range. Look out for the Platinum displays in these stores or check the cover to make sure it has the Platinum logo on the front. If it has Platinum on it - it must be good!

Just for starters....

Destruction Derby



Released November 1995, Destruction Derby was bought by every man and his dog. Destruction Derby was the first PlayStation title that was link up compatible - that is 2 PlayStations, 2 TVs & 2 games - for full screen 2 player action. With amazing graphics and innovative gameplay, Destruction Derby soon became a classic!

Wipeout



Released November 1995, Wipeout became one the most popular titles in the first batch of releases. With incredibly fast, high resolution graphics, backed by a pumping techno soundtrack - Wipeout set new standards for the genre. Includes tracks by The Chemical Brothers, Leftfield & Orbital.

Ridge Racer



Released November 1995, Ridge Racer from Namco, was the first ARCADE game that had been converted to PlayStation. An addictive racer which is great to drive with the neGcon, Ridge Racer was fast, very fast. The best feature of this game is that you can load the game and replace the disc with your favourite music CD - then you can race to the dulcet tones of Celine Dion and still hear the games sound effects.

Tekken



Released December 1995, Tekken was one of the first fighters developed in a fully realised 360 degree 3D world, to grace the PlayStation. This title swept the critics off their feet. An incredibly fluid, graphically stunning fighter, Tekken was heralded the best fighter game ever. With sales well and truly over the 300,000 mark this game should be in a range of its own.

Battle Arena Toshinden



Released November 1995, Toshinden is a 3D fighter with a devastating array of characters wielding deadly weapons and a plethora of special moves. Developed by Takara Toshinden has taken its place next to Tekken as one of the best fighting games available on the PlayStation. Definitely worth checking out in two player mode.

Air Combat



Released November 1995. What range of games would be complete without a flight simulator? This all action flight sim mixes a very realistic 3D engine with addictive and ultra-playable gameplay. A choice of over a dozen high performance planes, each with its own flight characteristics and weaponry makes for a game with plenty of depth.

For hints 'n tips call the: PlayStation PowerLine 1-902-262-662*

* Calls are charged at a rate of \$1.50 per min. A higher rate applies from public and mobile phones.

» Goldeneye Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: MAY

CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: RARE/NINTENDO

Dang danga dang dang, dang dang dang dang danga dang dang pa pa pa pada da da da. "James, I want you to listen very carefully. Last night while you were asleep the boys at Q division snuck into your hotel room and converted your willy into a satellite navigation system with built in pulse doppler radar and dual windscreen wipers, be very careful when you do up your fly!" And so begins Rare's (Donkey Kong Country, Killer Instinct) first venture into 1st person mayhem, based on the Bond film Goldeneye. The game follows the film quite closely, to the point where blueprints for the actual film sets were used to make some of the 3D locations. It won't be a pure Doom clone however, in the best Bond tradition the game will also feature chase scenes (car, boat, helicopter), all the babes and baddies from Goldeneye (and a few other favourites on secret levels) and will also differ in its' approach to 'reality' James will only be able to carry two of the wide variety of weapons found in the game at any one time and he WONT be able to heal by running over a floating red box, or anything else for that matter! Goldeneye is looking good for an early winter release - we'll keep you posted.

G.S.



» Redneck Rampage PC

AVAILABLE: MAY/JUNE

CATEGORY: 1ST PERSON

PLAYERS: 1-8

PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY

"Get the dawgs Virgil, one o' the Thompson boys has done gone an' interfered with Bessie and I'll be danged if n I'm gunna let 'em spoil our prize Heifer two years in a row!" Yep those busy people at Interplay have been listening to Banjo music and fantasising about fat men in overalls, what can become of such sick and depraved behaviour?

Redneck Rampage is a new first person shooter based on the 'Duke Nukem 3D' engine. It involves the story of Leonard and Bubba, whose favourite cow Bessie has been kidnapped by aliens for purposes unknown. Strange cloning experiments have been taking place in little ol' Hickston and now there is a veritable army of Redneck freaks standing between you and lovable Bessie. He he, of course you have a few tricks up your sleeve that oughta' take care of 'em - dynamite, bear traps, alien zap guns and your trusty old bird gun! The game includes fourteen big levels to play through and some tasty tunes as well - should be a hoot.

G.S.



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» X Wing Vs Tie Fighter PC

AVAILABLE: MAY

CATEGORY: SPACE COMBAT

PLAYERS: 1-8

PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS

Star Wars rocks, and the most popular Star Wars games have been X Wing, and TIE Fighter. Well, what could be better than putting both titles together? No, not as a package, but as a single game that will fulfil every Star Wars fanatic's fantasies. Well, the long awaited X Wing Vs TIE Fighter is not far off now, and it should be a blinder.

Without a doubt, the coolest feature of X Wing Vs TIE Fighter is the multiplayer option, where up to eight players can get together and play out some serious space combat missions. Imagine it... sitting through debriefing with your mates, planning out your strategies, and then going at it against some other friends... and blowing them to bits!

There are over fifty original mission scenarios, including convoy escorts, assault strikes, space superiority, the works! In addition, you're not just limited to X Wings and TIE Fighters, as there are nine Rebellion and Imperial craft to fly.

The graphics engine has been reported to have been given a big shot in the arm, and judging by the screen shots, one couldn't argue with that. There have been some delays with this one, so we're kind of assuming they've been adding in support for 3D accelerators, etc. To make it look as sexy as possible.

Unfortunately Lucasarts are very secretive about their big projects like this, so till we actually see the full game, there probably won't be much else we can tell you. Should be one of the biggest PC games of 97.



» Crusader No Remorse Playstation/Saturn

AVAILABLE: APRIL

CATEGORY: ACTION

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: EA

Crusader No Remorse was a ground breaking title when Origin released it about two years ago and, as nothing else like it has ever been released by any other company, it still looks remarkably fresh to this day. Crusader could be described as a very sophisticated 3D platformer, an RPG or simply an action game. The player's role is to guide their 'Silencer' through various missions in an effort to continue the resistance movements fight against a totalitarian future world government. The 'Silencer' can duck, run, sneak and roll sideways to manoeuvre around his 'destructive environment'. He has access to a wide range of wicked equipment including a nice selection of projectile and energy weapons, guided spider bombs, mines and other assorted goodies. The game is mission based and has a continuing story to go along with the action, which is constantly fast and frenetic. If the conversion can capture all the nuances of the PC original then this will be a must have for all Saturn and PSX owners



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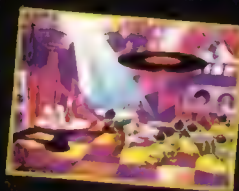
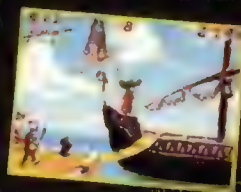
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» Rage Racer

Playstation

AVAILABLE: MAY
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: NAMCO

Namco just keep 'em coming don't they? Rage Racer is, obviously, the sequel to Ridge Racer Revolution and if you liked that title you're probably going to love this one. Rage Racer is a more gritty experience all around. The cars are much more customizable than ever before, you can choose their colour scheme, logos and driving characteristics in a series of setup screens that look like they belong in a Grand Prix sim. You can even design your own logos to put on your car.

The driving model of Rage Racer is more 'sim' like than in previous Namco titles, far more emphasis has been placed on gear changes, revs and slides so you'll have to be more on-the-ball to play successfully. There is also a prize money system where the first three place getters receive cash bonuses which can be used to buy car upgrades (turbo etc.) or even a brand new vehicle.

As you can probably tell from the screen grabs Rage Racer's appearance has been spruced up too. The graphics look less bright and cutesy than in the Ridge Racer titles with a more detailed, realistic look taking over from the old one.



» Xevious 3D

Playstation

AVAILABLE: JUNE/JULY
CATEGORY: ARCADE
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: NAMCO

Retro gaming is hot at the moment with more reissues and updates of old games coming out than ever before. For those of you not familiar with Xevious, it was one of the quintessential (most influential, important, cool, right on etc.) shoot-em ups of the early eighties. Pioneering the use of vertical multilayered parallax scrolling, at the time it was the most visually impressive game of its kind by a long long way. It certainly kept me off the streets and away from the petty crime and extortion rackets that made up most of the activities of the Police Boys club of which I was a member. The Xevious machine at my local arcade had more cigarette burns on its' plastic front panel than any other game, always a sign of superior quality and gameplay. Seizing on the major nostalgia potential of a remake NAMCO have decided to go the 3D treatment and give PSX owners the chance to relive the fun of the original game with one extra dimension. Xevious 3D will be a strange kind of hybrid shoot-em up flight sim thingy putting the player into a landscape filled with bizarre alien craft, motherships and big boss dudes, looks like a lot of fun!



WHILE YOU SPENT THE LAST SIX MONTHS OF YOUR
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» Legacy of Kain PlayStation

AVAILABLE: LATE MARCH
CATEGORY: ACTION ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: CRYSTAL DYNAMICS



Crystal Dynamics entered the 32 bit gaming scene with Gex, a humorous, likeable, platform game character. Their latest effort on the PlayStation is pretty much at the other end of the scale... featuring a guy who is no longer living, and has a taste for blood. It's kinda of a video game playing Goth's dream come true... a game where you get to run around wounding mainstream society, and drink their blood. You are Kain, a nobleman who gets brutally murdered, but is then offered a chance to exact revenge on his killers... this means becoming a vampire.

Legacy of Kain sounds to be a huge game with over 160,000 game screens (try count em while you play), in which you wander in search of a means to return yourself to your mortal form. Kain can morph into a wolf, a bat, a peasant, and into mist. These forms give him the ability to overcome various obstacles. There's a bunch of different swords and sets of armour to collect, and over twenty spells... so there's lots of stuff there for those that get their thrills from powerups in video games. To ensure you don't miss anything, there's a dynamic camera feature that ensures you see every bit of action and gore that the combat has to offer. Looking through the characters and plot, there seems to be a lot to Legacy of Kain, which is also helped along by plenty of cutscene enhancements and lots of speech throughout the game... adding just that extra bit of atmosphere. Should be a different kind of game to what we're used to seeing on the PlayStation (or on any system for that matter). Will be out VERY soon, so look for a full review coming up.

B. T



» Need For Speed 2 PC

AVAILABLE: MARCH/APRIL
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-4
PUBLISHER: EA



The first Need For Speed sold in ridiculous amounts, after being in the top ten sales charts for longer than most Madonna songs and EA are hoping the sequel will do at least as well, if not better. Speed2 promises more cars, more tracks, more polygons and more dead pedestrians than ever before with at least eight of the world's fastest beasts at the players disposal. The McLaren F1, Lotus Esprit V-8 and Elise, Ital Design's Cala, the Jaguar XJ220, Ford GT90, Isdera Commendatore 1121 and the Ferrari F50 are some of the cars which will be featured in the new game, all being motion captured in higher detail than in the original title. There'll be seven new tracks to tool around on too including scenic locations like Mexico, The Himalayas, Hollywood and Norway. Speed2 will boast all new audio effects, lighting and foggy bits too. Multiplayer mayhem is catered for with split screen two player, head to head modem or eight player IPX games included, the PSX version will also support linked games. Everyone who loved the original game, and there's lots of you out there, will want to check this out!

G. S





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Starcraft

PC

AVAILABLE: JULY-AUGUST

CATEGORY: STRATEGY

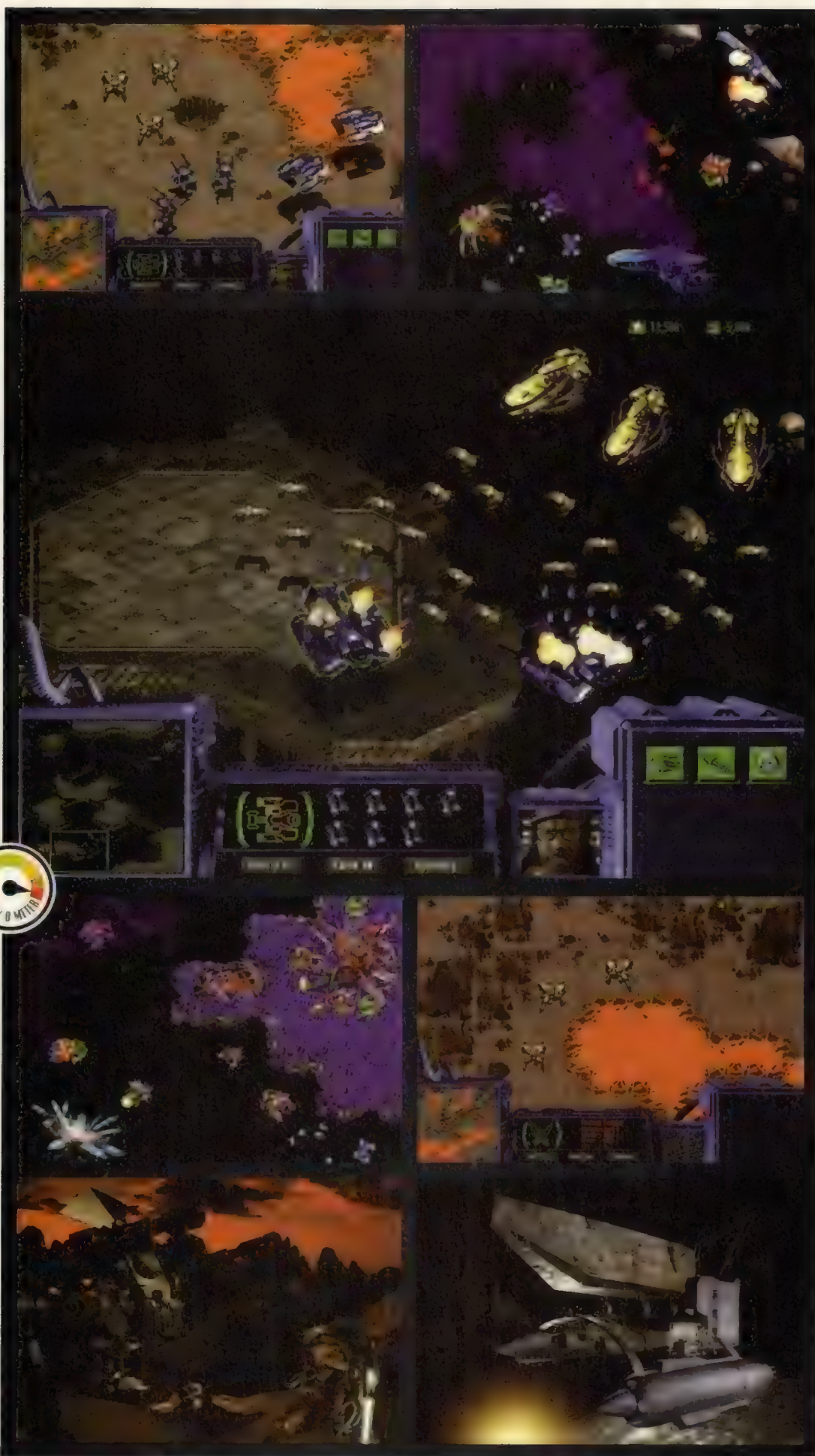
PLAYERS: 1-8

PUBLISHER: BLIZZARD

Blizzard are on a roll that any software developer would be envious of. Not content with creating a game that has taken over the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, namely Diablo, they are now feverishly working to get Starcraft out by mid-late winter. The eagerly awaited sequel to Warcraft II will surprise people already jaded with real-time strategy games with its fresh approach and innovative features.

Blizzard showed an Alpha of Starcraft to a few people at the last E3 and were perturbed by the ho hum reaction so they went back to the drawing board to try and come up with something totally amazing. So Starcraft is now built around a totally new game engine with a 3/4 perspective view instead of the familiar top down Warcraft look. The action is based around the conflict between three different races, the Terrans, Protos and Zurgs, all vying for supremacy in a newly found part of the galaxy. Where Starcraft will differ from other real-time games in this respect is that none of the three races have ANY equivalent units at all! Each will have a totally different way of gathering resources and of fighting their opponents to the point that playing each race will be almost like playing a different game. Blizzard's designers have also chosen to move the game's interface from its traditional position on the side of the game screen to the bottom to make it less distracting and to create a bigger on-screen playing area. The interface will also boast a more complex command system with the player able to give units multiple and/or goal dependant orders (ie. 'If this happens then do that, if that happens then do this etc.') The gamescreen will also be altered radically from the previous norms for this genre of gaming. Play will not allways take place in one single homogenous area. In some missions the playing area will actually be divided between several different 'islands' of territory with the player(s) having to transport all of their units and resources around the place to complete the job.

One of the things which gave Warcraft so much appeal was its' personality, or rather the personality of its' men and beasts. Blizzard have acknowledged this by concentrating on this aspect of Starcraft too, promising much humorous banter and jolly japes from the characters under your command whether they be human or alien.



play virgin



March

Survival's
Simple: Newer ship training
Scream through 57 rounds of blood-pumping, heart-pounding, mind-bending mazes in this sci-fi, cyber-speed chase to hunt down enemy flags. Cast a myriad of magical spells to thwart monster opponents like the menacing Minox or the Empress Vorgo. If you've got the stamina and smarts, Grid Runner will keep you guessing, gaming and going for hours. A new 3D nightmare blindly addictive game

features

- 57 massively challenging rounds
- 15 menacing, maniacal opponents
- 2 player head-to-head action
- 28 independent two-player rounds
- Ability to perform different spells (teleporting and firing)

GRID RUNNER:

category	Arcade tag game
platform	PlayStation, Saturn, PC
rrp	\$89.95
rating	G

Classic arcade action, direct from Japanese codeshop Taito. Bubble Bobble has been captivating crowds for high on 12 years. What actually makes Bubble Bobble 2 so attractive is pure gameplay, and plenty of it with a hint of strategy. Individual screens, each constituting a single level, are riddled with carefully structured ledges. To complete all 120 levels, the players must eliminate adversaries by blowing bubbles, capturing the enemies within, then popping the bubbles with spikes on their heads to dispose of their foes

features

- 120 levels
- Plenty of bonuses and fireballs
- 10 customary bosses

BUBBLE BOBBLE 2

category	arcade
platform	PlayStation, Saturn
rrp	\$89.95
rating	G

April



February

Terrorist activity is at an all time high. Efforts toward regional stability and peace are failing. A top secret Black Operations military group has been assembled. Your mission is to save innocent civilians and take over terrorist militia at any cost. You will attack, destroy, escort, rescue, defend and survive at any cost. Black Dawn delivers high arcade action to PlayStation and Sega Saturn owners

features

- An advanced "on-the-fly" 3D environment for fast action, a high frame rate for silky smooth animation
- Spectacular special effects including full 3D explosions with flying debris and shrapnel
- The most control of any game in its genre
- 360° of visual freedom
- 32 high risk mission over eight different terrains

BLACK DAWN

category	Helicopter Shoot 'em up
platform	PlayStation, Saturn
rrp	\$79.95
rating	G8+ low level animated violence

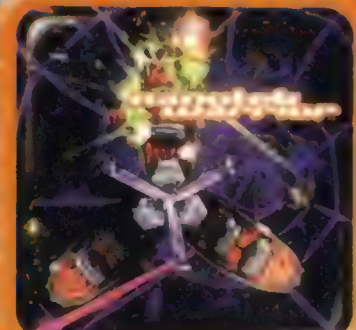
Nano-robots are attacking the world. As the Nanotek Warrior, players must shoot their way through 8 successively Nanoscopic dimensions and ultimately defeat each huge boss to save the planet

- Transparent smoke, texture mapping, gouraud shading, and high-end 3-D acceleration in a futuristic environment
- Variety of ship movements, controls (jump banking, barrel roll, sprint, hyper-space and floating descent with power-ups) and weapons to choose from
 - Large variety of enemies with 360° of freedom, unique powers, animation and play mechanics
 - Tight, addictive gameplay with high replay value and responsive controls.

NANOTEK WARRIOR

category	Arcade Shoot 'em up
platform	PlayStation
rrp	\$89.95
rating	G8+ low level animated violence

May



» Dark Reign -The Future of War PC

AVAILABLE: JUNE

CATEGORY: STRATEGY

PLAYERS: 1-8

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

Warcraft I & 2, Command & Conquer and Red Alert, and now KKND... these are the games recognised as the best real time strategy games money can buy. It seems we'll have another real time strategy masterpiece by an Australian developer soon enough, as Australis Microprogramming are developing a new futuristic wargame called Dark Reign. People often scoff at those that take their time about things and have their releases come out last, but titles like Dark Reign completely justify that "Let's take our time and get it right" attitude. How have Australis got it right? Well, they've taken Command & Conquer and said "How can we make this game better", and they've come up with a startling amount of answers.

Firstly the graphics are superb, looking far more natural and less "Hi! I've been built by a square based map editor!", in appearance than previous real time strategy games. A contributing factor to the improved visuals is the implementation of altitude, so rather than just being a flat terrain with some impassable mountains and water, there's now hills and valleys, which not only affect the way it looks, but the way the game plays too. You can see further from the top of a hill, hide units behind them, etc. Dark Reign even accounts for the steepness of a hill, which affects the way units can move up or down them.

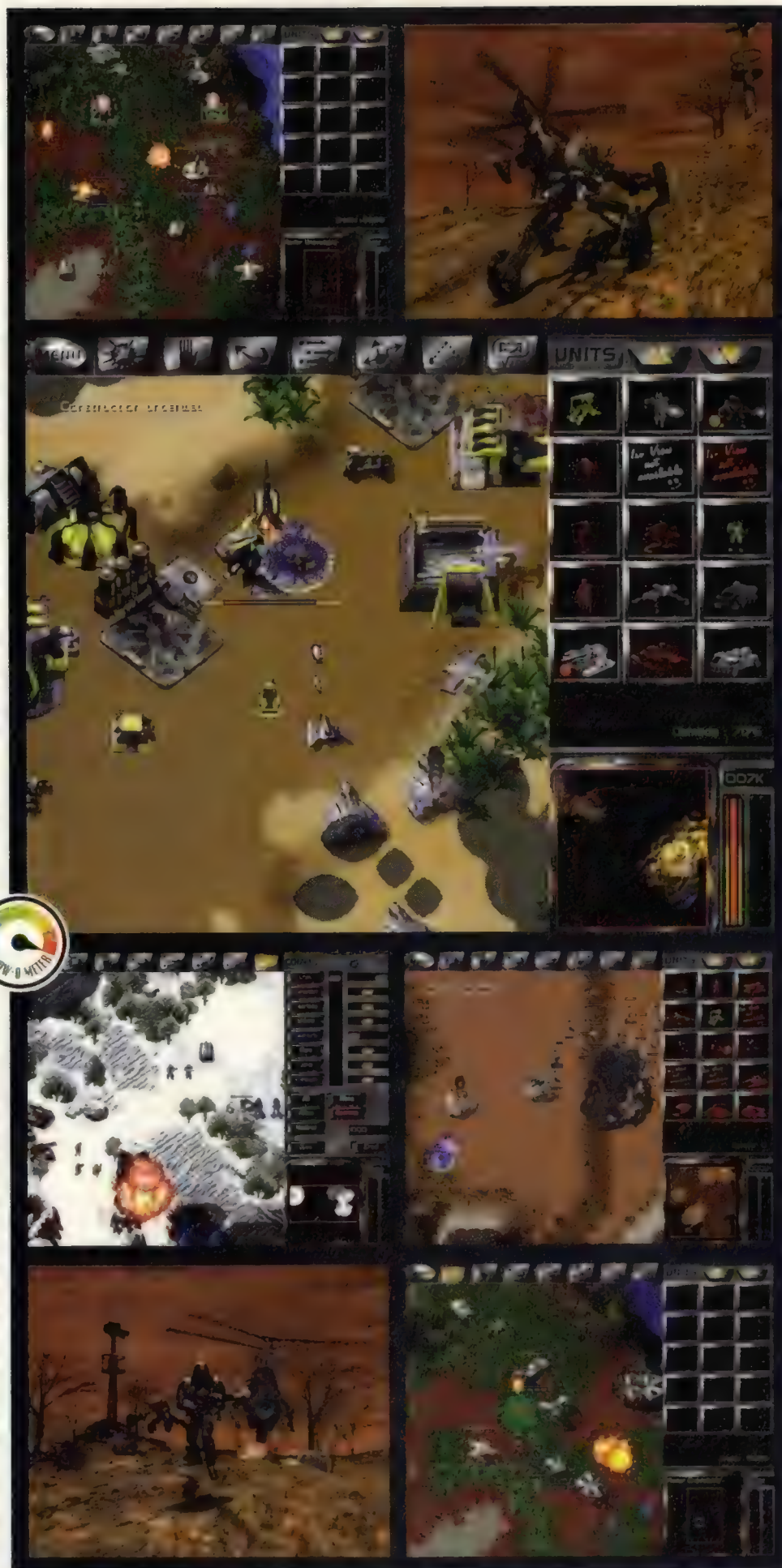
The units themselves are amazing, with more intelligent unit control now available. For example, you can adjust a unit's tenacity meaning you can decide how aggressive a unit is, making it fight to the death, or run away at the first signs of combat, without you having to continually click on the unit in question. You can also adjust their autonomy, so they can either be sit on their butts till you give them orders, through to going about what ever they feel is best. There are also sentry, harassment and hunter/killer modes for all units... so you can really have your units do exactly what you want them to, without having to baby them by doing a stupid amount of button clicking.

Complete control of unit movement is possible with waypoint settings, and you can even tell a unit to walk back forth along that path, or do a loop by going straight back to the 1st waypoint. You can also group your units however you like, and assign them to follow waypoints, and also apply "global" unit settings to them... it's like everything has been thought of.

The AI looks very impressive, with computer opponents not only running away when they're outnumbered, but also identifying threats, determining what it needs to take that threat on, and going about doing everything it needs to do to make that required force.

On top of all this, the entire game is completely customizable in that you can make up your own scenarios, graphics, and units. Victory conditions can be one or more of a host of options, making the game a lot more in depth in multiplayer than just another tonk fest. It's a bit like Quake in that it's a whole new gaming engine, as opposed to a neat new game with lots of options.

Looks utterly amazing and this, along with KKND could suddenly make Australia the world leader in this gaming genre... now wouldn't that be nice?..





Deathtrap Dungeon

PC

AVAILABLE: APRIL

CATEGORY: ACTION

ADVENTURE

PLAYERS: 1-MULTI (NETWORK)

PUBLISHER: EIDOS

I just got myself a 3DFX card and I was kind of despondent that I'd already finished Tomb Raider, because with the new hardware, it's utterly breathtaking. Well, for those of you like me who want more of the same, Eidos are gearing up to bring us all another masterpiece... Deathtrap Dungeon. Numerous fantasy freaks will recognise the name as the title of the sixth Fighting Fantasy book from the Games Workshop, by Ian Livingstone. The storyline of that book was pretty simple, there's a lot of gold up for grabs if you can get through Baron Sukomvit's annual dungeon bash. No-one has ever made it through, falling prey to the hordes of nasties, and fiendish traps that bar your way.

The game looks very similar to Tomb Raider, except with some more interesting textures and lighting effects. Of course there also looks to be a whole different slant to the game in terms of combat, with sword fighting, spell casting, blunderbusses and close quarters combat all coming into play. One look at these screen shots implies that we're looking at some really impressive baddies for you to come up against. There are apparently fifty-five types of characters and creatures to come up against, ranging from warriors, priestesses, necromancers, orcs, and other humanoids... through to undead creatures like mummies and zombies, and even the big 'uns, like dragons and hydras.

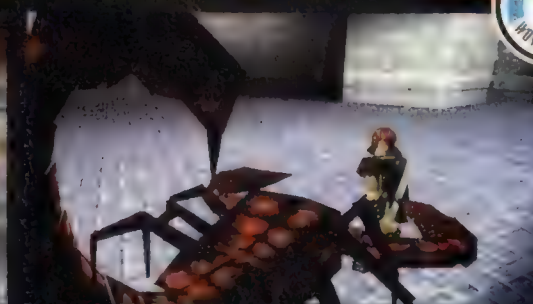
One thing that Tomb Raider didn't have that Deathtrap Dungeon did is multiplayer gaming. The plot of the old Deathtrap Dungeon story was that several adventurers went into the dungeon at various intervals and only one could walk out at the end. Hopefully this will include the ability for players to take one another on, and also work as a team at various points in the game.

The game is said to have a frame rate somewhere around 20 FPS, which of course will be much higher for those with 3D hardware accelerators.

Richard Halliwell, author of the Warhammer and Space Hulk games, led the programming team, and Jamie Thompson, former editor of White Dwarf magazine was also involved in level and game design... so the right people for the genre are behind the game.

Should be a big one... especially with those that loved Tomb Raider, and those that are after a good action based fantasy adventure.

D. T



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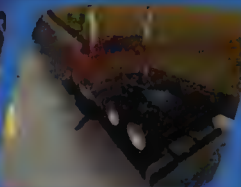
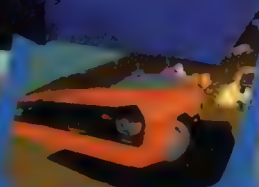
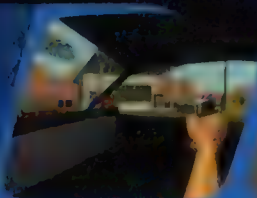
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Beam came into being in 1980, starting with "The Hobbit" for the Sinclair ZX-81. They went on to produce some classic titles as Melbourne House, including "Way of the Exploding Fist". Melbourne House (Publishers) was sold to the Mastertronic group in 1987, and then Beam went on to develop for the PC, Gameboy, NES, SNES, etc.

Well, Melbourne House has been reclaimed by Beam, and we're seeing their first two new titles, EA Cricket 97, and KKND... both reviewed this issue. I was fortunate enough to be able to go down to Melbourne, check out Beam's HQ and

work here.

As far as producers go... well you need to be organised, know about games, have good communication skills, manage at least 3 projects on the go all with 1 million dollar budgets and cope well with stress.

Every body that does work at Beam needs to be able to work comfortably in a team due to the size of the projects.

Hyper - We're seeing the return of Melbourne House with Cricket 97 and KKND, how's the response been to the return of the old label?

THERE ARE LOTS OF VIDEO GAMES IN THE WORLD, THIS MUCH

take a peek at the developers at work.

The best way to sum up what's been going on at Beam is to talk to the developers, about what they've been doing, their thoughts on the industry, and how things happen... I was lucky enough to interview David Giles, Executive Producer and get the confessions of a game developer.

Hyper - Being the only big games development company in Australia, do you think Beam essentially corners the programming talent in this country?

DG - I don't think we have cornered the market although if a programmer is obsessed with games then they will probably approach us at some point. Game programming is fairly specialised and many of our staff learn game coding skills while they are at Beam.

Hyper - What about the lure of working overseas... do you see Australia losing programming talent to bigger developers overseas?

DG - In Europe it has been huge... They all remember the old titles and can't wait to see what Melbourne House can produce in the nineties.

Hyper - What sort of numbers do you have working on each title, with games such as KKND, Cricket 97, Alien Earth, etc?

DG - On average we have about ten core people associated with the project and then certain other areas that come on line when we need them, like Q.A and network specialists etc. Of course this does vary as we have over twenty people currently working on Alien Earth mainly due to the amount of art needed for this project.

Hyper - Is there a difficulty with getting stuff published and distributed over here in Australia... from a developers point of view?

DG - All of our products have to be distributed internationally if we want to get our development costs back. Australia is a most important market to us but obviously not the largest one. KKND is

AROUND THE WORLD MAKING THOSE GAMES, BEING SUCH A SMALL PORTION OF THE VI

DG - This is always a risk, although some of the bigger companies are going through cutbacks at the moment. And why would you leave this beautiful county to go somewhere else. We have people from overseas approaching us because they want to work in Australia... It must be the exotic wildlife.

Hyper - What sort of backgrounds do the development staff of Beam tend to have? What sort of qualifications do people trying to make it in this industry tend to need to have?

DG - Our Artists often have had traditional design and art backgrounds and have moved into computer generated art which then has led to working with 3D and then they bring their folios to us. We are beginning to get folios from people that have only worked with computers and feel more comfortable with a mouse than a pencil.

What we really look for in a 3D artist is the ability to build organic stuff. Cars, Mechs and

being distributed throughout the world including the U.S, all of Europe and South East Asia. We are lucky enough to have E.A on board to act as our marketers and distributors for our new Melbourne House titles.

For smaller companies it is more difficult as all game titles will cost a great deal to develop. They need to have a title that will be able to match it with the best the world has to offer. This is only half the battle because then you need to market the title and if this fails they will be left with boxes of a great game that nobody knows about. Our Managing Director spends nearly a quarter of every year overseas, chatting to publishers and distributors. Not every body can afford this type of investment but it is crucial to survive.

Hyper - Would you call Beam more than just a games developer, considering projects like FAMOUS, or is this sort of thing just a bi

WELL, THERE'S REALLY ONLY ONE AUSTRALIAN SOFTWARE DEVELOPER THAT HAS I

geometric stuff is all very well but we need people that can build a realistic human model or a convincing creature. (By the way we are looking for people at the moment.)

Our programmers come from all over what they all have in common is an obsession with games. We often hire graduates and train them up. On a number of occasions we have received applications from people that have been game programming on their own which is great. Programmers generally will need to have completed a territory degree before they can

product of being a games developer?

DG - RGD is integral to how we work as a game developer as the only way to be competitive is to have technology that will enable us to produce top of the range games. Every game that we work on will have an RGD component and every now and then we will discover a niche such as FAMOUS or our own video compression and playback system that we can build and license to other developers.

Hyper - Would you say this is a friendly industry to be in? For example, do you all get on with other

software developers? Or is it a tad out-throat?

DG - I would like to have more contact with other game developers within Australia, but at the moment we tend to keep to ourselves, hopefully this will change in the future. It is a very competitive market place and game developers have to work very lean and smart to stay in business.

Hyper - Who comes up with your games concepts? Is there a way for folks with a good idea to get something into action even if they really don't have the resources or knowhow to

• Better battle sequences.

• Infantry to become veterans, they become stronger, more accurate, able to heal and therefore more important. If you have a crack troop you will save them for important missions rather than just throwing them at the enemy.

• Areas that worked really well in C&C leave it alone!

Hyper - Anything you can tell us about upcoming Beam projects that we're likely to see this year?

DG - Watch out for Alien Earth it's huge. The sequel to KKND is in production and Cricket 99 is in design. We are also developing a number of 3D

IS OBVIOUS... AND IT'S ALSO OBVIOUS THAT THERE ARE MANY GAME DEVELOPERS

go about making a game?

DG - We generate a great deal of ideas internally as we have 80 gameheads in an enclosed space it's bound to happen. We do accept outside submissions though and we have set up a games design committee internally to cope with all designs that we receive. The committee meets about once every two to three months to review any new designs we have received.

Hyper - How do you go about developing on multiple platforms? (PSX, Saturn, DCS, Win95).

DG - We have a low level game engine which is implemented on each hardware platform, so that once in place each platform becomes relatively similar and easy to deal with. However each platform has its own characteristics which makes each implementation of our game engine different.

Hyper - Is there a particular quality about Beam which you think is distinct in its titles?

environment titles that are under wraps at the moment but you will be the first to know when we start sending out info.

FAMOUS FACES

No, Beam is not full of ex-celebrities. What they are full of is good ideas, and a good example of this is their FAMOUS project, which is midway through development right now. FAMOUS is essentially a system that allows game developers (or animators, or whomever) to allow a human user to do simply attach a series of sensors to their face and pull the facial expressions that they want their computer generated character to perform, whilst sitting in front of a video camera. The program caters for such cases as animal or unusual shaped

TO GAME MARKETPLACE, ONE MIGHT WONDER WHAT GAMES COME OUT OF AUSTRALIA?

For example Bullfrog are notorious for being quirky and going off on weird new tangents... is there a "Beam way"? (this I realise is a bit of a bitch to answer... so if you don't have an answer, feel free to say so!)

DG - We generate games that have fired up a passion in the most jaded game players the staff at Beam. We are our harshest critics in that respect. Gameheads building games for Gameheads.

Hyper - KKND is obviously inspired by Command & Conquer... can you describe Beam's angle on how you went about trying to make a game in the same genre of a game you obviously loved so much?

DG - After months of the game in the building we worked out all of the features we would want improved if we were to build a game of this type.

• Better AI. There is nothing more frustrating than working out flaws in the CPU's AI and then using that to win every game.

faces, so you can get a "realistic" smirk on the face of a dog. This will save lots of headaches when animating speech of a game character, and FAMOUS is a real-time system allowing tracking and animating at the same time. This isn't just for internal use, as Beam will be releasing FAMOUS as a plug in for existing animation packages for use by other developers around the world. A good example that we do have serious contributions to the gaming industry, coming out of Australia.

The Beam crew are an eclectic lot, with youth, talent and experience all sharing the one building. Game development naturally has its share of suits, but even those one or two executive types I bumped into are serious game freaks, who love

IN AROUND FOR A LONG TIME AND MADE A NAME FOR ITSELF, AND THAT'S BEAM.

• Better interface. In a crisis situation you need to be able to access all areas quickly. More intelligent interface with the ability to queue troop production and get it out of view when you have finished with it.

• The look of the game. High res with beautiful backgrounds that don't need Win95 to run.

• Inject some black humour into the game, have mission briefings that you want to see more than once and actually tell you about your mission (Not just fluff).

• Huge mutated animals Vs High Tech very cool...

what they're doing. It's reassuring to walk into the sound studio and see a guy with hair most of the way down to his butt and a guitar at his side, then wander over to the head programmer's desk and see a chap who visually exudes scholarly levels of knowledge as to complex C code... talent sitting its natural place. We can only hope to see Beam grow and develop more cool titles... and any talented young folks out there (especially artists) who are considering going into the industry should get in contact with Beam at Level 11, 14 Queens Road, Melbourne, Victoria 3004.



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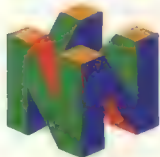
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DOOM

R HUNTER

ALL IS ON...

NINTENDO⁶⁴



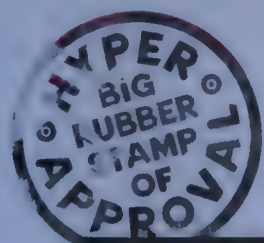
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Turok Dinosaur Hunter

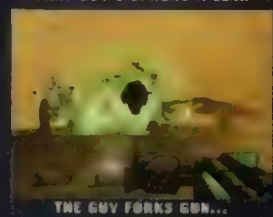
The Nintendo 64 gets its first 1st person shooter...
DAN TOOSE sticks a feather in his hair and checks out Turok, Dinosaur Hunter.

An important step in making a new system successful is introducing games that are of a well known genre, and having those games better the games of the same genre on other systems. Ever since Doom became cloned, it started a genre, and first person shooters are one of the most popular types of games worldwide. Acclaim have had a pretty rough trot for a while, but their first release for the Nintendo 64 is certainly a step in the right direction.

You're not a space marine, you're not a large sexist pig with a flat top, and you're not a trigger happy archmage toting a staff of eternal nastiness... You're a North American Indian, protector of the Earth although the way you nuke the countryside, one has to wonder. Well, the Earth needs protecting from some hombre called the Campaigner, who seeks to conquer the universe with his army of biomechanically enhanced dinosaurs (neat trick that), and you're the poor schmo who has to do it.



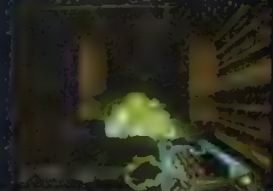
THAT GUY'S SPRUNG A LEAK



THE GUY FORKS GUN...



RE BAMB BEE... BAH!



A PERSONAL PARTICLE ACCELERATOR!

THAT'S NOT A GUN... THIS IS A GUN.

Turok starts the game as a rather humble chap, with only a knife and a bow to take on his enemies. A little further into the game, however, you begin to acquire some firearms, and by the end of the game, you'll have weapons which make the Death Star look like a pop gun. Some might not like the ridiculous size of these weapons, however they're done in very good humour, and look far better than any weapon in a game of this type. Our favourites are the mini gun, particle accelerator (which freezes your enemies then blows them up), the quad rocket launcher, and the fusion cannon, which is something like a portable A-bomb gun, which is guaranteed to have you in fits of laughter when you fire off your first shot. Your guns also affect the environment, for example, you can blow a tree to bits with your rocket launcher, etc.



FINISHING OFF THAT SMALL TOWN

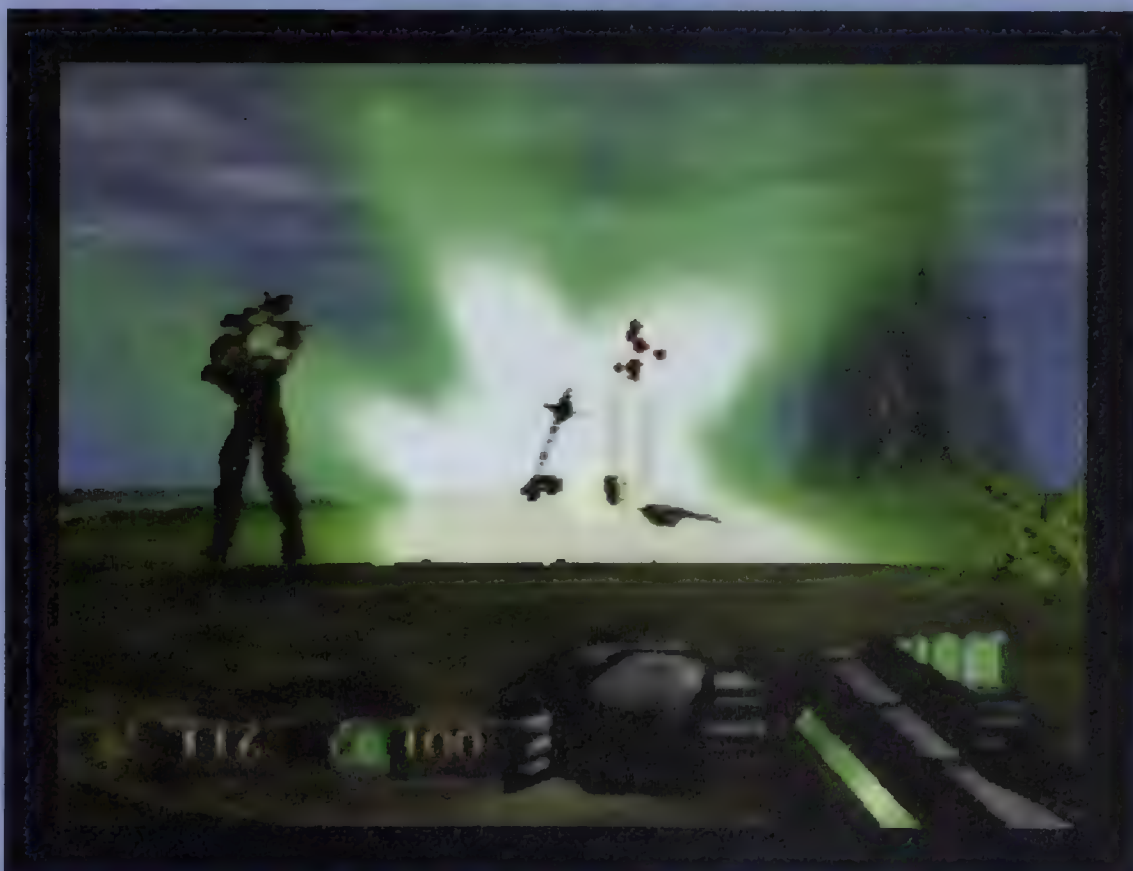
EAT... ERM... STUFF...

HE'S DA MAN... HI BOSS

WHAT A PAIN IN THE NECK...

YOU NUKED ME OFFA MY FEET NOW DADD, NOD!

YOU SHALL NOT PASS...



Hang it in the Louvre...

Talk about pretty, this game is it. Unlike the 1st person bits in *Shadows of the Empire*, *Turok* actually seems to utilise the graphical capabilities of the N64, which let's face it, is why everyone is buying the thing. Everything looks good in *Turok*, the ground, the walls, the trees, the buildings, the sky... which even has the sun up there, which creates a lens flare, and proper white out when you stare at it! Much more impressive than the backgrounds however are the creatures you face off against, which are far and away the best animated and rendered opponents in a game of this style (yeah, even better than *Quake*). Everything your adversaries do looks fantastic, from running, to attacking, and most of all, from dying. Rather than just blow up, or slump to the ground dead, the death scenes in *Turok* are over the top, and very cool. It's really satisfying watching your enemy clutch helplessly at the wound in their neck, which is spurting their life's blood in a great pulsing arc, or seeing your victim fall onto their back, then writhe along the ground, arching their back in agony.

Any fears of the N64's ability to pull off decent music can be dispelled with *Turok*, which has exceedingly themely music, which really suits the whole feel of the game. The drums, etc sound great, and really go to prove you don't need a CD in your console to get a good tune going. Equally as impressive are the sound effects, especially those of your guns, and of your victims groaning, screaming and crying in agony (I'm not a sicko... really).

Taking Control...

The inherent problem with playing a 1st person shooter on a console is that the best control method for these games are using a keyboard and mouse in tandem, which of course is not an option with a console. The Nintendo 64 controller however has the potential to be a really good controller for this style of game, and it has almost been in the best possible manner in *Turok*... almost. You can use the controller in a similar manner to playing *Quake* with a mouse, the only difference is, the analogue stick which controls your view, returns your view to dead ahead once you let the stick go, which means if you want to look up, you have to keep "juggling" the position of the stick, making it hard to take clear aim at an opponent on a ledge. A simple option to allow you to toggle whether or not your view re-centers would have fixed this, and made the controls pretty much flawless.

There are eight levels in *Turok*, which don't have to be approached in a linear manner, kind of similar to *Hexen*, where you complete little quests to acquire keys to reach new areas of the game. This should prove to be a good challenge for even the most weathered *Doom* freaks. Some of the architecture and level design is a little flat, but other bits are great, so it sort of evens out. This game is not amazingly original in concept, but it is done extremely well... and is easily the best 1st person shooter on a console to date.



AVAILABLE: MARCH

CATEGORY: ACTION

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

PRICE: \$129.00

RATING: M15+

VISUALS

94

Utterly brilliant animation and visual effects... a larger variety of background textures and it would be near perfect.

SOUND

90

Great music which should inspire other developers to get it right for the N64.

GAMEPLAY

87

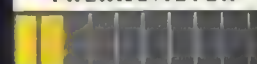
Not original, but very well done. The weapons rock hard!

OVERALL

90%

The best 1st person shooter on a console... fantastic.

FREAKOMETER



So visually yummy that everyone will want a go

Killer Instinct Gold

Super Triple Manual Auto Ultra Combo Breakers?? Hmmm...

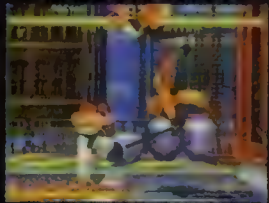
MARCH STEPNIK investigates

MORTAL INSTINCT?

Killer Instinct surfaced a little late for the whole SFII vs. MK debate, and it shows. What Rare did was borrow the better bits of the two established games, give 'em a bit of a tweak and make a game out of it. You can clearly see the influences - some of the moves (and execution of them) are similar, the attack buttons are right out of SFII (three levels each of punch and kick), the super bay blocks are MK influenced, even aspects of the presentation of KI Gold have a MK feel. This hybrid side of KI comes out more so in the graphics. Where SFII became progressively more cartoony and MK used digitized actors, KI Gold is whack bam in the middle of the two in terms of style.



MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2



KILLER INSTINCT GOLD



The raging issue behind the whole fighting game genre nowadays is whether "To 3D, or not to 3D?". A valid question, to which there is no simple answer. It's all a matter of taste really, as each side has its own kind of playing style. 3D fighting games look bloody amazing, with rendered characters that move, breathe and fight like they were almost alive themselves (VF3, Soul Blade). They tend to play more realistically too (well, as realistic as a 250 pound supreme-warrior with magic capabilities can play). 2D fighting games, on the other hand, go for pure pace (SFII Alpha, etc). What the 2D lacks in realism is more than made up by acrobatics and the schizo-array of freaky looking super-moves.

Crystal clear conversion...

Killer Instinct Gold is no exception. What you have here is an action-packed, hotted-up version of the arcade hit Killer Instinct 2. It's got it all; openers, special moves, super moves, combo breakers, end specials, and shadow moves galore. Each character has a whole stack of unique moves to contend with, enough to warrant the inclusion of a reference card to sort them out (and that doesn't include all of them either). Ten characters are at your disposal, with the newcomers being Maya, Tusk, and Kim Wu (Cinder, Chief Thunder and the reptilian dropped).

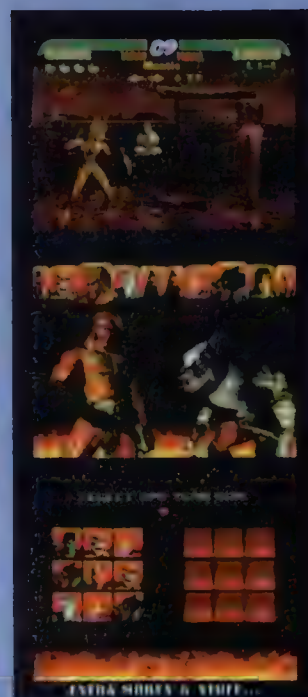
Rare did amazing things with the SNES version, packing almost all the moves and features of the arcade version while still managing to get the thing looking great and playing at a decent speed. With the power of the N64 to play around with, Rare have pretty much nailed it in terms of arcade to home conversion. Part of this has to do with that little analogue thumb stick. There's no need for the analogue capabilities of the thing, but it does allow for the most comfortable and natural way of pulling off circular-patterned moves on which KI Gold is based (one can also use the d-pad).

The graphics are arcade perfect, yet they look like they'd be just as comfortable as on a 32 bit system. The game is supposed to run beautifully at 60 frames per second, but the character animations are just too blocky and lack fluidity. The parallax scrolling of the backgrounds look great and adds that element of depth to the visuals. Not all went as planned though. In being overzealous with showing off the power of the N64, Rare overlooked one little aspect. KI Gold uses 2D characters, with a rotatable background. As you play, the background changes perspective and highlights how horribly 2D it all is. 2D players and 2D backgrounds work fine together, 2D and 3D do not. The end result is bog ugly and just feels unnatural.

Practice makes perfect...

The stand-out feature of Killer Instinct Gold is the training mode option. As mentioned there is a plethora of fighting moves for every character to master, and some of these in particular are rather difficult to pull off. Praise Rare! KI Gold actually teaches you how to become an accomplished martial artist in no time. This is done the ancient and sacred way - the training area comes complete with floating mystic for advice and spiked wooden dummy to practice on. After a shown example you must repeat the entire move in a specified amount of time. If you manage to pull it off, then you move on to the next, while failure results in the exercise being repeated. Sure, this may not be needed for the basic moves, but it's a great deal of help when you want learn how to pull of a special linked opener or a combo breaker, which sounds right in theory but just doesn't come off right in practice. Practice mode also has a drop down menu of all the moves, which is kept on screen while you perfect your technique.

Killer Instinct Gold is a comprehensive two-dimensional fighting game. It's got plenty of options, will suit all levels of gamers, and plays particularly well. It's nothing terribly new though. With no 3D fighters planned for release in the next few months, the N64 seems like it'll carry the 2D flag for some time (MK Trilogy is next). Which is a bit of a pity, because we're going to have to wait a bit longer to see how well the N64 handles the 3D genre. Oh well.



AVAILABLE: JUNE
CATEGORY: FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: RARE/NINTENDO
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: M15+

VISUALS

83

Fast and fluid.
Arcade perfect.

SOUND

78

The sound effects
are slightly tinny,
but satisfying.

GAMEPLAY

82

It is a 2D fighting
title, and a good
one at that.

OVERALL

80%

An enjoyable
fighter that will
appeal more to fans
of the series.

FREAKOMETER



This is one for those
that live and
breathe 2D fighters.



Shadows of the Empire

This job needed someone with cuter buns than Princess Leia and a more impressive Light Saber than Luke Skywalker's - obviously GEORGE SOROPOS was the man.

TRAINS, BIKES AND AUTOMOBILES

The difference between challenging gameplay and frustrating gameplay is something that is probably hard to teach to programmers who aren't gamers. One of Shadows' problems is that it seems to have been designed by people who really don't know as much as they should about what makes a game fun to play. The train and speed bike levels are, to put it simply, rooted. They are tedious, dull and frustrating and never should have made it into the game at all. Not wanting to be too harsh on the folks at Lucas Arts, we think this was a bit rushed to get it out in time for the N64's release and hopefully better things will come from them in time.



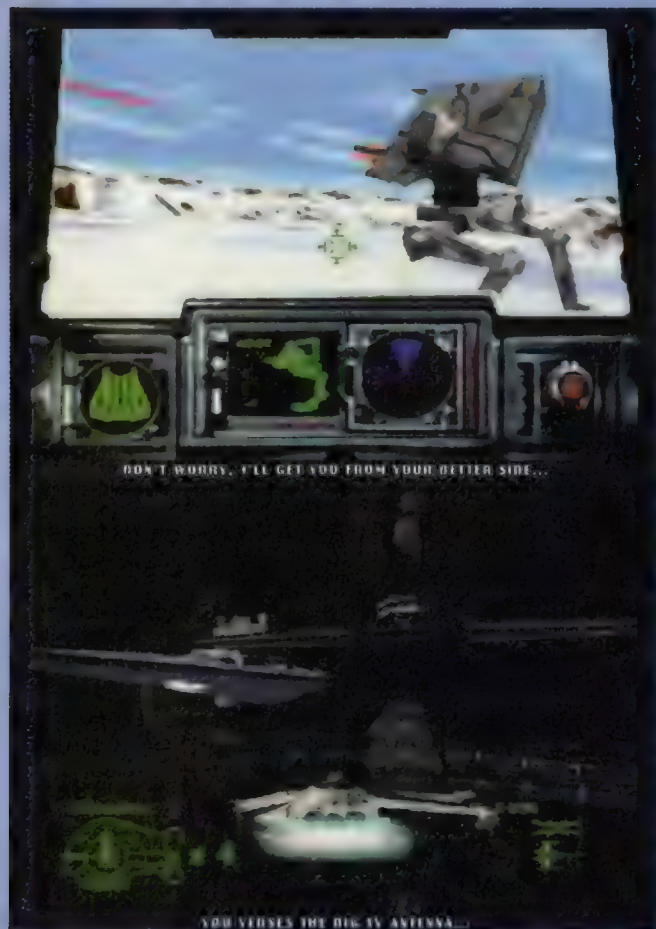
"Ever smelled a wet Wookiee" said the grizzled looking bounty hunter, eyeing me suspiciously as he sat down at the bar. "Nope" I replied "My girlfriend has a gland problem" He was not amused, almost taking my head off as he removed his jetpack and flung it onto the bar in between us. It was then that I realised who this surly character was, the infamous Boba Fett - bounty hunter, assassin, Rotarian and man of few words. "What brings you to these parts Mr. Fett" I said in a butch sort of voice. "Well, to be honest with you fella, Bruce Willis has hired me to freeze Harrison Ford in a block of chocolate mouse 'cause he's sick of being overlooked for more serious film roles and wants him out of the way"

"Ah" I said "So it's got nothing to do with Dark Prince Zizor - head of the Dark Sun crime syndicate wanting to squeeze Vader out of the picture and take on the role of the Emperors head honcho for himself then?" Fett looked a little surprised at this, slammed down his drink and got up to leave. "You talk too much fella" he said as he pulled out his laser pistol thingy and put a Volkswagon sized hole in my chest. As I sat there, amazed at the fact that I could now see the band on stage behind me by looking through my torso I wondered if I had really missed one of life's great experiences by not having smelt a wet Wookiee.

Save Luke Skywalker - Me?

Lucas Arts debut title on the N64 is, none too surprisingly, set in the Star Wars universe, sometime in between the events of 'The Empire Strikes Back' and 'Return of the Jedi'. It's been a while since the last Star Wars related title was released and Nintendo are obviously hoping that this will be a big draw card for people considering the purchase of a new console system. Lucas Arts record with Star Wars related games has been a bit patchy with Super Star Wars, X-Wing and Tie Fighter being excellent and Rebel Assault I and II and Super Empire Strikes Back not so good. Shadows of the Empire combines elements of all these games in a giant mixture of playing styles and genres and it's success varies just as much.

The basic premise is that the Dark Prince Zizor, in attempting to replace Darth Vader as the Emperors right hand man, is trying to kill Luke Skywalker and your job, as handsome rogue Dash Rendar, is to protect him at all costs. The game-play takes four different forms within the game so it's probably best to deal with them individually. The action starts over the snow fields of Hoth with you as the pilot of a rebel Snow Speeder, just like the opening of The Empire Strikes Back and Rebel Assault I, with your job being to stop the probe droids and walkers. Armed with lasers and a tow cable this task is probably the most fun you'll have in the whole game, it's my favourite bit anyway. The Speeder flies around beautifully with the N64 handling the complex graphics with ridiculous ease. The controller setup is well thought out here too, Shadows keeps the players left hand constantly on the middle grip making full use of the analogue thumb controller and showing how silly Sony were to stick with a fully digital system.

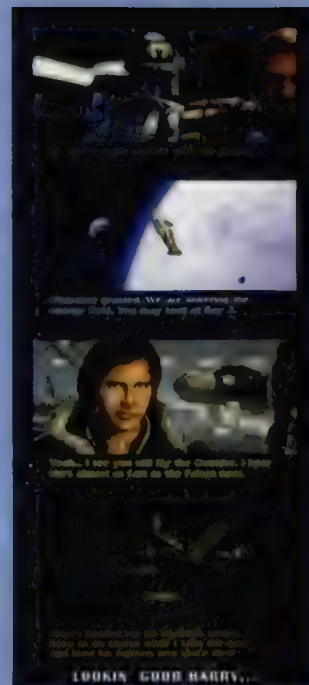


Doom Wars

From here the game goes into a first person shoot 'em up, a style which makes up most of Shadows' levels. The controller setup for these sections of the game is a bit clumsy with the thumb stick being a bit over sensitive and could have been set up better with forward/backward movement controlled by the yellow buttons instead and the stick used entirely for aiming a-la Quake but I guess it's just a matter of practice!

Thirdly we have the space combat sequences which alternate between free flight dogfighting and 'on rails' Rebel Assault style blastathons. Tie fighters and bombers are your main enemies here and these sections are probably the easiest in the game. Lastly, not in order of appearance in the game by the way, there is the Swoop Bike level where you race machines similar to the ones used on Endor in 'Return of the Jedi' through Beggars Canyon trying to stop a bunch of smelly bikers. Out of all the different sections of the game this one is easily the most frustrating as your bike handles appallingly and the level design sucks, it's just no fun!

Shadows of the Empire is a great game for neophyte gamers and Star Wars nuts but seasoned pad pushers may find it lacking in a few areas. A few of the levels are simply designed to be hard, not fun and this, for me anyway, led to a lot of frustration and much nashing of teeth. Overall it must be said that it could have been done a lot better and that it really doesn't seem to push the N64 very hard. That said, there is enough here to keep a lot of gamers happy for the duration and help keep the Star Wars name alive for another generation.



AVAILABLE: APRIL
CATEGORY: ARCADE/ACTION
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
PRICE: \$119.95
RATING: M15+

VISUALS

86

Opening level on Hoth looks good but the level design in the 1st person bits sucks.

SOUND

70

Shadows sounds OK but not great

GAMEPLAY

79

The flying elements of the game work really well, other elements are not as cool.

OVERALL

77%

Nice ideas with patchy execution

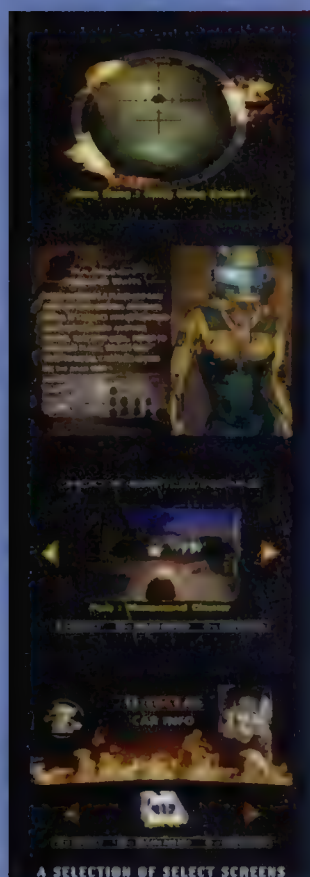
FREAKOMETER



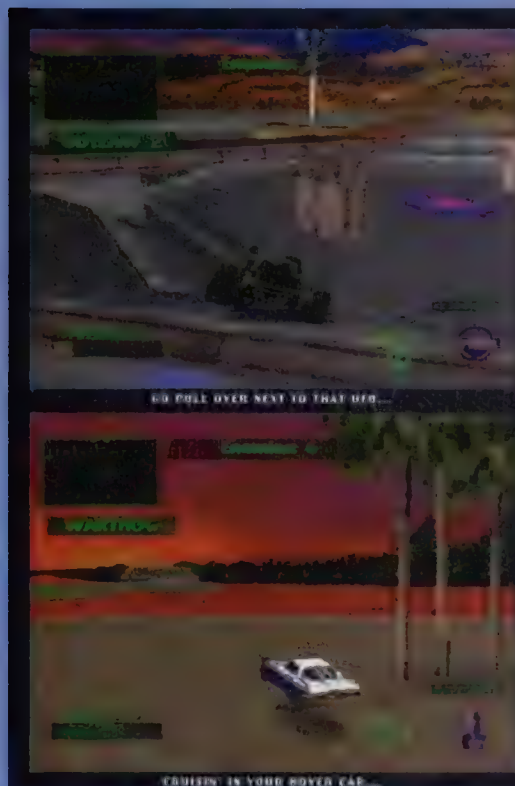
You don't have to be into any particular game genre to get into this one people

Twisted Metal 2

The Sequel to what was a love/hate game ends up in the hands of DAVID WILDGOOSE, and he certainly didn't hate this one.



A SELECTION OF SELECT SCREENS



NO PULL OVER NEXT TO THAT HUF...

CRUISE IN YOUR ROVER CAR...



IF YOU'RE ATTACKING A BULLDOZER WITH A MONSTER TURCH...

YOU MIGHT BE A REDNECK...

DESERVES A DESIGN AWARD...

One of the many reasons why Twisted Metal 2 is so damn good is that the level design is fantastic. And not only is each arena excellent in its own right, but there is a hell of a lot of variety (in both size and layout) between all eight of them. Los Angeles has a wide open oval in the middle surrounded by a super fast, curving race track. The action in Moscow takes place in a huge bowl with two bridges criss-crossing above. Hong Kong takes you through the CBD grid, the harbour, and the endless subway system (watch out for the trains!). Holland consists of little more than a large square field with a couple of windmills that will be destroyed within minutes. My favourite, though, is Antarctica, thanks to the treacherous trench through the centre, the high sniper points, and the way bits of the icy ground can simply collapse under your wheels, sending those unfortunates plunging into the sea below. Clever use is made throughout every arena of teleports, and there are secret bits to find in each. Hint: try planting time bombs next to different buildings, just to see what happens. You might like to start with the Eiffel Tower.



BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA...



A LITTLE NAPALM NEVER HURT ANYBODY... ERH...



HERNETH VS. HERNETH



BURN BABY BURN... FRENCH AUTO INFERNO...

LOOKING TO BUY A USED CAR?

Finding the right car to suit your own style of play might take a while. If only because you'll be having a ball testing out every single one of them over and over again. All the cars have varying armour, speed and handling abilities, as well as a very distinct look. But where they really come alive is with their special weapons. Everyone has one, though some are better than others (the weaker ones make up for it in speed or whatever). The most spectacular has to be Mr Slam, a great stomping front end loader that can pick up his opponents and smash them into the concrete. Although, Grasshopper, a little jeep that leaps into the air and divebombs everyone while yelling "Yee-Har!!" is really cool, too. I like Warthog, personally, his triple rocket launcher might not be overly imaginative, but it's incredibly effective.

I had been hanging out all month for our copy of Mario Kart 64 to arrive in the Hyper office. Much to my despair, it was postponed for at least a month, so we'll be reviewing it next issue (maybe) [Maybe not Dave]. In a bid to temper my immense sorrow, Dan handed me Twisted Metal 2 to review instead. I took it, of course, and - wow - to my great surprise, it ever so nearly did the trick. I really, really, like this game.

Sorry, but I'm going to have to mention Mario Kart again. No, no, it's not because I'm too distraught to think of anything else. The idea behind Twisted Metal 2 is essentially the same as the Battle mode in the SNES version of Mario Kart. For both games there is a track, though arena is probably a more accurate term. Randomly placed in the arena are anything from 2 to 8 competitors, whose goal it is to be the last one standing (or driving, since they're in cars). Finally, scattered all around are various weapons and power-ups, whose job it is to be the tools for causing as much destruction as possible. And that's all there is to it.

The first time I played I tended to get a bit carried away. I was holding down accelerate continually, lurching all across the arena, crashing into walls, flying up ramps, ramming the other cars, spraying machine gun fire everywhere, and launching missiles at anything that moved. A few days later and, well, I'm still doing pretty much the same thing! Okay, okay, perhaps that isn't entirely true. I admit, I have discovered the art of subtlety, managing somehow to learn a few tricks and adopt something resembling a strategy. Like being able to control my car properly for a start - it's not easy when you're being bombarded by rockets and bombs that can send you flying halfway across the arena, especially on the tight streets of Paris or the rooftops of New York. Or like darting round a bend, spinning virtually on the spot, then hurling a homing missile into the face of the psychopath chasing me. Or how about perfecting the art of dropping napalm into the path of my hapless opponent without taking myself out in the process. Watch someone play Twisted Metal 2 and it can seem like one hell of a mess, but play it yourself and you'll soon realise that it's a surprisingly sophisticated game. In that way it also reminds me a little of Virtual On. And, like that fantastic game, this is pure gameplay, and that means gameplay with real depth.

Twisted Metal 2 leaves Destruction Derby for dead. This is one of the few Playstation games I wouldn't even hesitate to buy (if I hadn't already got it for free, of course!).



AN EXHIBITLY BOMBED CAR WAGON...

IT'S NOT QUITE COINSTEAD ON ICE... BUT IT'S PRETTY COOL.

NATURE'S WORKING FACILITIES...

AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: ACTION

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: SINGLE TRAC

PRICE: \$79.95

RATING: G8+

VISUALS

87

Cool level design and great looking cars, but the explosions are the real stars.

SOUND

84

The music rocks and the FX are cheeky and very funny.

GAMEPLAY

88

A simple idea that's been brilliantly executed.

OVERALL

87%

A killer game. Get it. Now!

FREAKOMETER

No tricky concepts here to deal with, fun for everyone.

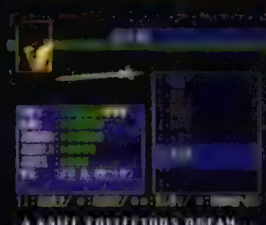
Soul Blade

Namco return with another 3D fighting game that looks to better than it's arcade predecessor. DAN TOOSE grips his rapier and takes on Soul Blade.



A QUEST TO TEST THE BEST

Tobal No. 1 gave us our first real taste of a quest mode in a 3D fighting game, but Namco have done it a little bit better than Squaresoft. Rather than go for the 3D, running through corridors, picking up various items kind of approach, Namco just stuck to fighting... with a plot, and called it Edge Master Mode. Instead of a string of conventional bouts, you can take each of the characters through a series of episodes, where they fight for the right to earn extra weapons (which you can use in the standard game once you've unlocked them here). The fights might have special twists to them, like you must win by ring out, or your opponent may be immune to all damage when in contact with the ground, or they only take damage from throws, or you must win within a certain time limit, your opponent is constantly healing, etc. Some of the various bouts are extremely challenging, and will put a smile on the faces of all the fighting game freaks out there without fail.



Okay, so the idea has been done before with Toshinden, but having a bunch of guys and gals with ridiculous names, ridiculous hair styles, ridiculous weapons and even more ridiculous physical proportions seems to make for a decent fighting game, and Namco have now ventured into the realm of 3D weapon-fighting games with Soul Blade. In the typical Namco way, Soul Blade is better than its arcade predecessor, Soul Edge, having all that was there in the arcade, and a little bit more.

The gist of Soul Blade is that there's this legendary pair of swords known as Soul Blade, which is currently in the possession of one Cervantes de Leon, a Spanish pirate. You play one of ten characters whom attempt to battle their way through the others to claim the swords for yourself.

A Flash of the Blade

Soul Blade proves the constant improvements that Namco are making with their visuals in 3D fighting games. Tekken 2 was very good, but Soul Blade just makes it look ugly... with great use of camera angles, lens flares, and those mesmerising translucent trails of light that follow your weapons as they carve up your opponent (or vice versa if you suck). The texture mapping is a lot more detailed than any other 3D fighting game on a console thus far, and the whole thing is in a decent resolution, and a high frame rate... it just looks very impressive. The backgrounds are just as impressive, being true 3D environments, with superb light sourcing, and even changes between night and day.

To complete the whole audio-visual experience, Namco have also got the sound effects down perfectly, with that lovely metal-on-metal sound ringing away as you go into some intense fencing duels. The music is, erm... okay. It sort of catches the air of combat, but not quite as polished as the visuals.



HWANG EXECUTING THE VASECTOMY ATTACK



TAKI... PERFORMING THE ARC WELDING STRIKE OF DEATH...

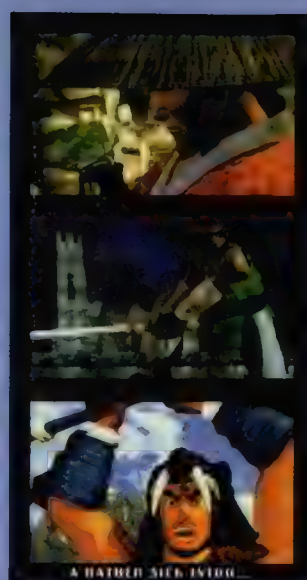
There can be only one...

Well you didn't expect the combatants to shake hands at the end of the day and call it a draw did you? Soul Blade is a fighting game that is more similar to Toshinden than anything else we've seen, with a button for weak attack, strong attack, kick, and block. There's also the ability to dodge, which you can do with the direction pad, or by assigning it to a shoulder button. Unlike the Tekken games, Soul Blade is not a game of killer combos, with more emphasis being put upon correct choice of moves as opposed to an ability to master a long, rapid sequence of button pressing. An emphasis of "One hit wonders" is absent in Soul Blade, with the unblockable attacks being slow to the point of near uselessness, and the desperation moves being quite easy to block... which of course promotes tactical battles, which is a good thing.

A very funky feature is the inclusion of the sword meter, which represents how much more punishment your weapon can take before it gets blasted from your hand. It's a bit like Samurai Shodown, except that you can't regain your weapon till after the bout is over. The characters are all quite evenly matched, with no characters being so good or bad to the point where it detracts from the game.

All standard fighting game features are there, like Practice Mode, Vs Mode, Survival Mode, Team Battle Mode, etc... but the addition of Edge Master mode really helps add some depth to the whole thing, giving you a chance to earn extra weapons, and provide a challenge with a plot.

Soul Blade is essentially another 3D fighting game, with a couple of extra features that help give it the edge. It's biggest draw card is its visuals, and Edge Master mode, which should help provide a bit more longterm appeal for those that are sick of simply beating someone up without a sense of reward.



AVAILABLE: APRIL
CATEGORY: 3D FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: NAMCO
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: TBA

VISUALS
92
Trust Namco to ensure that their latest fighting game is the prettiest one yet.

SOUND
80
Fantastic sound effects, but the music is a bit average...

GAMEPLAY
90
A bunch of evenly matched characters and the added bonus of Edge Master mode make Soul Blade a great game.

OVERALL
90%
A predictable result from the top fighting game developers for the PlayStation.

FREAKOMETER

Visually impressive enough to draw gamers in, but Edge Master mode is really for the freaks.



Total NBA '97

When RUSSEL HOPKINSON's on tour, he meets a lot of tall, black sweaty men... he also watches some basketball too.

Not long after the Playstation hit the streets, it became very apparent that Sony was trying to woo the rather lucrative sports market by hiring ex-E.A. staff members and pumping out games like NHL Faceoff, NFL Gameday and Total NBA, all very much in the E.A. Sports tradition of killer gameplay and a multitude of options. It's since taken quite a while for E.A. to peg them back and let's face it, the competition has made for some excellent games.

When I first saw the aforementioned Total NBA, my jaw literally hit the floor. The spunky graphics, exquisite camera angles and iE.A.-like presentation really pushed home what the Playstation was capable of. It certainly was a leap forward for Basketball games.

So how much of a leap forward is Total NBA '97? Well, let's just say that if you own a copy of Total NBA there's really no reason to rush out and buy this, of course the game has been tweaked a bit, but not to the point where it reaches a new level of excitement. The player and team lists have been updated, of course, and the graphics are perhaps a little bit cleaner but really you won't need this unless you are a died in the wool, rabid, slaving basketball fan.





Lovely Dribble Cam

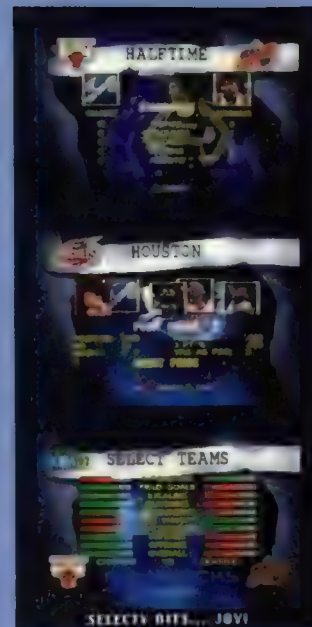
"But what if you've never played or seen this game before?" I hear the cave dwellers amongst you ask, well imagine you are watching a basketball game on the telly but you actually control the players. That is how good this game is. The camera angles are wicked and the scrolling is as smooth as a baby's butt. The player animation is pretty much faultless; the work that must have gone into this game is mind boggling. If you've never seen Total NBA; one look at the on-court presentation will blow you away, the shiny wooden court reflecting the players and lights, the roar of the crowd and the booming voice of the commentator all add up to an extremely enjoyable basketball experience.

The number of configurations you can play this game in is pretty standard for a top flight sports game but this aint no bad thing. Difficulty levels, Game modes, Quarter lengths, Team rosters and Playoffs are all adjustable, allowing for a lot of personal preference to dictate how the game will be played. Up to eight mates can play and the comprehensive list doesn't miss out one team. I can only stress that if you love basketball and you don't have a basketball game then this is almost certainly the one to get.

Controlled Dribbling

Gameplay??? Hell, this game is easy to learn but will take a while to master. As with most sports games the more people involved the more fun you'll have, but that doesn't stop it being an excellent one player game. If anything, Total NBA '97 is almost a little bit fairer on the novice than its predecessor and you won't be getting thumped the first time you sit down to play this (Hello NFL Gameday!). The control Pad is set up sensibly and on screen help will let you know what to do. The action is fast so learning to switch players in defence along with the run of play is of utmost importance. In season mode you can rotate players and try out new formations for your team, management options are limited but satisfactory and all in all the game continues on in the fine tradition set by the original Total NBA.

But again I stress that if you own Total NBA '96 and feel satisfied with your purchase then there is really no point to buying this, as always renting is a good option and a few hours behind the controls of Total NBA '97 may convince you otherwise. Of course if you're basketball mad then you've probably already made up your mind to rush out and buy this and hey, I can respect that! I have to give this a good mark because it's class incarnate but at the same time this "remix" perhaps doesn't go far enough.



AVAILABLE: MARCH
CATEGORY: SPORTS
PLAYERS: 1-8 (MULTITAP)
PUBLISHER: SONY
PRICE: £79.95
RATING: G

VISUALS 85

It's lush and sexy,
Top Class

SOUND 85

Great Commentary,
cool SFX and
thump'n muzak just
like you need

GAMEPLAY 90

It's moving on from
the original, excellent
at both entry level
and for veteran.

OVERALL 86%

Whilst I might
express reservations
because of its
similarity to '96; it's
still one ass kickin'
basketball simulation

FREAKOMETER



Those owning Total
NBA '96 would need
to be real keen to
need this game too.

Area 51

Area 51 is a shooter. Can you believe we trusted MARCH STEPNIK with a gun?

AREA 51 VS. VIRTUA COP 2

We gave both *Area 51* and *Virtua Cop 2* a most thorough road test here at the Hyper tabs. With the same gun too (the Predator), so one can't use the "your controller is better than mine, this one is crap" excuse. *Virtua Cop 2* is the stronger game by a mile. Even if you prefer the sci-fi X-files setting and feel of *Area 51* over VC2's "cops and robbers" make-up, VC2 shines. The graphics in VC2 have a much greater depth than *Area 51*. There are more characters too, that have a much more impressive repertoire of snuff sequences than *Area 51*, as well as cool car chase scenes (where you can blow the tires away and destroy the cars) and the like. There's also a sense of purpose and realism in VC2 — hostages and hideouts and jewelry stores. The end result is that when playing VC2, you're in the thick of the action. With *Area 51*, you're shooting at things on the screen.



VIRTUA COP 2



AREA 51



There's something unashamedly fun about standing in front of a television screen holding a gun, unleashing a barrage of destruction and blowing things into conveniently packaged parts. Man and machine working at mass destruction - sigh. My first shooting game experience came in the form of Duck Hunt on the venerable NES. I still get scary flashbacks from it. These days though, things are getting better. Virtua Cop for the Saturn has been the only worthwhile (read: excellent) gun title for the consoles thus far, but as sure as developers that will see a hit and clone it, there's a slow trickle of shoot 'em ups hitting the home machines. Area 51 is one of them.

Here's a twist!

Run for them hills: the aliens are attacking!

Area 51 is a spot on the west coast of the United States famous for its connection with extra-terrestrial entities. Apparently there's a whole manner of alien gadgetry (and possibly life) stored in vast underground network or buildings under the guise of an inactive military installation. The game Area 51 is based on this premise. Things have gone amiss - the aliens revolt (part of some elaborate plot to take over the world). The government has made the decision: infiltrate the base, find the power core, and nuke the place to bits. You are a key member of S.T.A.A.R. (I never did worked out what it stood for), a group of elite soldiers. Armed with a gun, you are given the task of Saving the World. So the setting sees you initially on the air base, then in a hangar, and finally underground as you move closer to the core of Area 51.

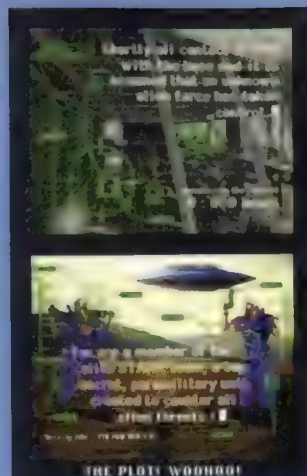
The idea of the game is simplicity in its purest form: shoot the things that most resemble aliens. Point and click, that's it. You are graced with a holding of 8 bullets per magazine, of which there is a limitless supply. When you run out, one adopts the Virtua Cop method: shoot off screen to reload. Thankfully, there's no penalty if you reload before you run out of bullets. Using a first-person perspective, the action moves along a pre-determined path, ie. it is on rails. Initially you'll come across zombie-like creatures (these were human once) in jumpsuits, and later, the full-blown aliens themselves. They'll pop up from behind crates and things and start shooting. Every couple of minutes or so an alien with a huge rocket launcher appears, as well as an alien that'll start hurling crates and things at you. There's a fork-lift chase, a jeep ride, and a most entertaining elevator ride to keep things interesting. Think Virtua Cop and you're on the right track. And Area 51 is mighty pretty to look at too - the backgrounds are highly detailed and look rather impressive. A word of advice, they should've dropped the hammy digitized acting from the game altogether.

Close, but no cigar.

Games like this really need to have a truckload of quality, otherwise shooting at things becomes boring fairly quickly. Area 51 comes close to being an ace arcade shooter, but falls on its face in key gameplay areas. They're not major flaws, just missing features and a general lack of attention to detail. That imparts that horrible feeling that Area 51 could have a much better game if the developers stuck at it longer. Sloppiness and laziness is no excuse. Firstly, there are only two kinds of enemies, four if you include

the same aliens in a different colored clothing (and skin). Shoot them, and they explode - no classy stumbling, keeling over, or gasping for air. The transportation bits are also a little stale. How can riding a forklift truck get you pumped? Shooting at the crates and things that are thrown is an exercise in frustration - not responsive enough. Interaction with the environment is at a minimal in Area 51. You can't blow off the forklift's tires and watch it dilapidate off in another direction.

Area 51 is a decent shoot 'em up. You'll enjoy it initially, become very familiar with it a few minutes in and a master a few minutes after that. You'll finish this one, but you won't feel yourself wanting to come back for much more after that. Go for Virtua Cop 2 to satiate your shooting desires.



AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: SHOOTER

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: GT/WILLIAMS

PRICE: \$89.95

RATING: MA15+

VISUALS

82

Great backgrounds.
The explosions
look okay

SOUND

71

While the gun sounds
are okay, the alien
noises are weak. The
music had little effect
on atmosphere.

GAMEPLAY

74

Point the gun and
the pull the trigger.
Not polished enough.

OVERALL

77%

With more of an
effort on the
developers part, Area
51 could have rivaled
VC2. It doesn't

FREAKOMETER



One for those dying
to own a gun game,
but anyone can pick
it up right away.

Sega Ages

With his wardrobe outta date, DAN TOOSE was the likely candidate to take a squiz at the Saturn's first Retro compilation, *Sega Ages*.



Whether due to Namco's success with their Namco Arcade compilations for the PlayStation, or perhaps simply because Sega want to make sure you can get the same sort of deal on Saturn, Sega have released the first of their "arcade classics" with *Sega Ages*. Rather than go for Namco's approach of jamming five games on the one CD, Sega have opted to stick to three of their classic arcade hits... *Space Harrier*, *After Burner*, and *Outrun*.

The games are arcade perfect, which of course isn't hard considering the Saturn is far more powerful than any of the original arcade machines for these games. Although many of you will have seen and played all these games, we'll look at them all on their own merits, bearing in mind they are very old games, and really for the old gamers out there who wouldn't mind a trip down memory lane.

Outrun

In it's time, this game was a revolution in video arcade racing games. What more could you want than a convertible Ferrari Testarosa and a femme who's suitably impressed by your machinery? Nothing, which is probably why *Outrun* ended up being such a hit. Well, that and the fact it had better graphics than any other racing game at the time, and that the whole machine moved as you steered left and right.

Obviously *Outrun* doesn't come with a device to strap you in your favourite armchair and throw you about, but the conversion is however spot on. The deal is quite simple, you take off in your Ferrari, haul through the current stage, choose your next stage by taking a fork in the road, and try and make that checkpoint in time. The game is thus seamless, once you start at the beginning of the first track, you're going hammer and tongs till you either make it to one of the five different endings, or you lose.

Outrun was one of the first games to include skidding as you took a corner too fast, and this is where all the challenge in the game lies. Unfortunately, the game suffers a bit with your lack of analogue control, but mastering how to time your slides will soon cater for this. More of a joystick challenge than a racing sim by nature, which is good for those that want a car game that is immediately graspable.



Space Harrier

This "3D" shooter is the epitome of weird, and simple, all at once. You're this guy wearing red, and you have this bloody great big laser gun under your arm. You are running along, and you can also fly, how it's not at all obvious, but you can fly. Space Harrier proves that you really don't need any sense or reason to make a game fun. While all the game really involves is moving all over the screen and firing at any baddies coming at you, it somehow remains quite addictive, possibly having a hint of that same element that makes Wipeout so damn cool... that frantic pace which doesn't leave you time to scratch yourself. Your opponents range from large gun-dam mechs, through to bounding florescent mushrooms. In favour of Space Harrier, the arrangement of your opponents is done in such a way that you're constantly being tested, which helps keep things challenging. Having to dodge through the oncoming pillars, trees and rocks makes it a bit more interesting than your average old shoot em up was. The most frustrating thing about Space Harrier is the fact that so much is going on that you really can't see a lot of the shots being fired at you, or the enemies zooming in on your position. Getting hit by a shot that was trailing behind some explosion in front of it isn't much fun at all. Not one for epileptics, as the oncoming ground which scrolls in at your feet can seriously mess with your brain... but a good fun, fast shooting fix for those with fast reflexes and joystick skills.

After Burner

I can't recall if this game was pre or post the Top Gun movie, but it could well have been some sort of inspiration for this F-14 Tomcat shoot em up. If one was to consider that modern air combat is all about getting a lock on a target then pushing a button, then you could say that After Burner was spot on in the sense that it's extremely easy for you to get nailed by the countless enemy jets firing sidewinder missiles at you. This game is more about survival than ensuring you take out all the baddies, since the length of your game is entirely based upon how good you are at dodging the incoming missiles. Unfortunately the same things that make After Burner look cool are also the same things that make the game frustrating. Once you and your opponents let fly with a few missiles, there'll be so much smoke on screen that you'll get completely lost in the fray. Maybe I just sucked at this game, but it really proved to be the least fun of the three. I recall being wowed by the visuals when it was first released in the arcades, but of course now the visuals are quite dull, and unfortunately the gameplay isn't gripping enough to make it a pleasant trip down memory lane.

As a whole Sega Ages is quite an average product. While some old gamers might get a smile on their face as they have flashbacks of glory days in the arcade, the novelty value doesn't really compensate for the lack of depth and gameplay in most of these titles. It really is one strictly for those wanting their old classics on Saturn, and the fact that there are no completely bodgy games (like there are in the Namco Museum discs) is nice. You're probably better off going for one of the strong, modern Sega titles, like Sega Rally, Virtual On, or Panzer Dragoon... which will all keep you interested much longer.



AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: RETRO

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: SEGA

PRICE: \$69.95

RATING: G

VISUALS

55

What does one expect with ancient titles?

SOUND

77

Somehow hearing the sounds really brings back the feel of when the game was new.

GAMEPLAY

65

Simplistic retrospective fun, but there's not the depth today's gamers are used to.

OVERALL

63%

Whilst being good as a retro compilation, it doesn't stack up against a good new game.

FREAKOMETER



Easy to pick up, but it's really just for those dying to relive the experience.

Sonic 3D Blast

Sega's front man.. err hedgehog makes his 32 bit debut...
Did NINO K give a standing ovation?



THE INTRO IS EASY, THE GAME IS NOT



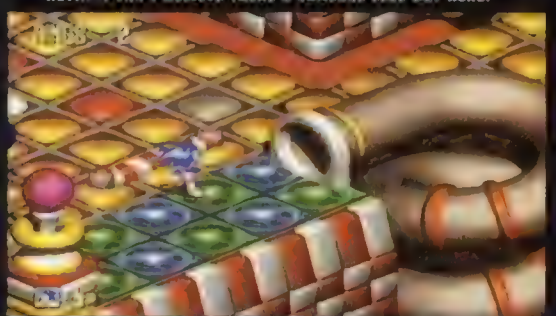
WHATCHA WATCHING SONIC... MUM... HYPER TV?



MEV... I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE OUT HERE!



RUNNING UP A SHEET OF ICE... GOOD LUCK DUBE.



BEWARE THE VACUUM CLEANER ATTACHMENT OF DEATH!

BONUS SHMONUS

The 3D half-pipe stages are reminiscent of the Megadrive version of Sonic. The Saturn however, is much more capable of processing the polygons required for this kind of 3D. More stuff like this should have been added.



At last, the little blue fella' has made his 32-bit debut. "Sonic the Hedgehog" was a huge success on the Megadrive, and now it's time for a "Sonic 3D Blast" to Saturn! Many fans have been waiting anxiously for this one, wondering what kind of changes have been made to spruce up Sonic to a 32-bit level. Well most noticeably, (as the name states), this game is "3D". Gone are the days of 2D, side-scrolling to the left and right. Now, Sonic can travel in any direction he wants, within a beautifully rendered 3D world. This game is actually a Mega Drive game that was ported over to the Saturn, which has halted the development of the eagerly awaited Sonic X-Treme.

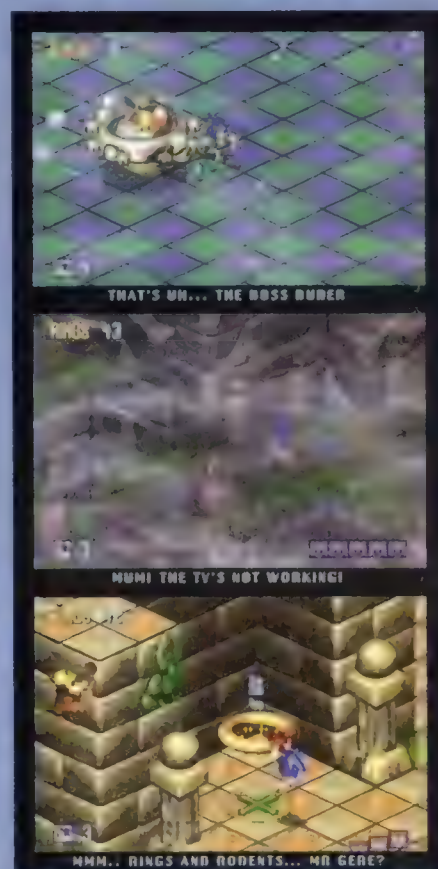
Smooth and repetitive...

The look (and control) of this game is very similar to "Captain Quazar". It employs a similar, semi-top-down perspective, and the overall graphic style is quite the same. Everything has been beautifully rendered, and it is obvious that a lot of effort has gone into drawing the characters and backgrounds of this game. The result is a very crisp and clear, detailed environment, with no pixelly objects. Some of the walls and surfaces look solid enough to touch. All of the animation is very smooth with zero slow-down. As with Captain Quazar, there are various little animations that will catch your eye... Simple things such as a mouse sticking its head out of a pot, or when Sonic gets frozen into a cubic ice block. Other nice graphical touches used in this game are fire, fog, rain, water and transparency effects. Yet somehow, even with all of these 32-bit effects, this game fails to be visually impressive. There's just nothing here that hasn't been done before, even on some 16-bit games. One of the best looking parts of the game, is the bonus stage. If Sonic gives Tails or Knuckles 50 rings, he gets to run a cool 3D half-pipe stage, which is similar to the Megadrive version of Sonic. These bonus stages are good fun and look great, but unfortunately, they are only a tiny part of the game.

Handles like a dog

Although the graphics in Sonic 3D are nothing special, good control and playability could have made this game a winner. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The playability in "Sonic 3D" is just as "standard" as the graphics. The action just seems to move too slowly, not at all matching the pace of the old Megadrive Sonic. Also, the controls just aren't responsive enough. For example, if Sonic is running in one direction, and you suddenly turn in the opposite direction, Sonic will travel a couple of extra steps before changing direction. These extra couple of steps can be just enough to let you walk into hazards. Also, jumping onto tiny moving bridges is quite difficult, and will take an annoying amount of tries before you get it right. Control just isn't there. (However, it must be noted that most games with this type of overhead playing perspective inherently lack precision controls, e.g. Captain Quazar, Desert Strike etc.). The main aim of the game is for Sonic to collect 5 little birds on every stage, and then deposit them into the large golden ring at the end of the stage. While it's quite fun, this can get a little boring, and even frustrating, especially when you are looking for the final bird on one of the larger, more confusing stages. The end of stage boss (Dr. Robotnik) is basically the same throughout the entire game. You simply have to keep jumping on the glass dome of his little ship until you defeat him. Thankfully, the sound in this game is decent. The FX are quite adequate and some of the music tracks are pretty cool, one of which sounds similar to that gothic "Enigma" song.

Overall, Sonic 3D just seems to have a 16-bit feel to it. It just doesn't have the innovation or flash that many other new games do, like Nights, Mario 64 or Crash Bandicoot. If this were any other game, it might not be that bad, but this is Sonic, Sega's flagship videogame character! He deserves more than this. If the entire game was more like the bonus rounds, then it probably would have turned out better, but as it is, Sonic 3D will only appeal to a young audience and die-hard Sonic fans.



AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 3D PLATFORM
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: SEGA
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: G

VISUALS

65

Clear and colourful, but lacking the flash of today's games.

SOUND

60

Some good tracks that are adequate, but nothing particularly memorable.

GAMEPLAY

59

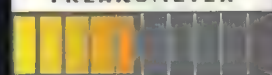
Could have been much better. Lacks the pace we loved.

OVERALL

63%

Should have been much more. Sonic X-Treme should be much better.

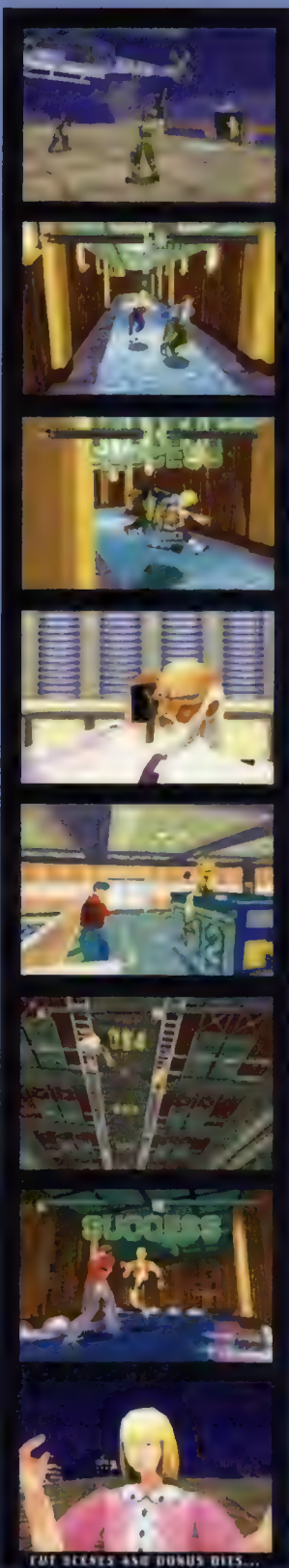
FREAKOMETER



Gameplay is simple enough, but unresponsive controls may repel some.

Die Hard Arcade

Yippie-Ki-A! No, it's not a western, it's an arcade beat em up.
DAN TOOSE tonks his way through *Die Hard Arcade*.



SO UNPLUG THE JUKEBOX...

No, it's not an old Adam Ant song, but the extra game, *Deep Scan*, bunged in with *Die Hard Arcade* is definitely a classic example of Retro. Maybe we're all a bit too old here at Hyper, but we all peaked a little when we saw what was a perfect example of an overly simple old arcade game which somehow manages to entertain you. The game is just a "move left & right and fire" job, but your performance here can earn you some extra credits for the *Die Hard Arcade* game, which you will undoubtedly need.



In the late 80's there was an arcade revolution after the coming of Double Dragon. The side scrolling beat em up which let you move in all directions was born, and it took the gaming world by storm. After countless clones like Final Fight, Golden Axe, and others... the genre sort of died out. It's amazing what 3D polygon graphics can do, isn't it? Like revitalise a dead genre. The proof lies in Die Hard Arcade, a progressive 3D beat em up arcade game, which has now been ported to the Saturn.

Script Schmipt! Just Tonk!

With the words "Die Hard" in the title, you'd kind of expect to have Bruce Willis running around taking out hordes of guys with European accents as he clutches onto a pistol with his arm twisted at a ridiculous angle. Contrary to everyone's expectations, Die Hard Arcade seems to have very little to do with Bruce Willis, or even any of the Die Hard movies for that matter. The game is essentially a beat em up with two characters to choose from: A stocky sort of guy that might pass for Bruce Willis in a very dark room, but really holds no similarities other than the fact he dresses the same way as John McClain; and a femme in tight jeans who unlike most fighting game girls, doesn't have a problem with swollen glands, or an outfit that you'd expect to find only at the House of Fetish or the Tool Shed. These two move from scene to scene, battling a host of thugs, and taking a few out on the run in the "bonus stages" between the various battle locations. The whole game is set around a big building overrun by terrorists, but there's no other connection between that and the Die Hard movie.

I'm trying to think of a better way of describing the way the whole game looks, without saying "It's like Final Fight, with a 3D, texture mapped polygon approach", but I can't, that's really how it looks. I can however elaborate, and confirm that everything does look quite cool and spiffy. The animation is really nice and smooth, and the moves look very cool... although some of the folks walk like they have a large vegetable lodged firmly up their arse, maybe that's part of the plot we don't about or something? The camera angle moves around a bit, which is nice, since it contributes to ensuring the whole thing looks 3D, rather than just having 3D polygon fighters on a 2D background.

The sound leaves a tad to be desired, with the speech being kinda muffled and fuzzy. The sound effects, however are quite acceptable, and the music is bad to the point of being good sometimes, if you know what I mean. Guys and girls make suitably satisfying "Ooof" noises as you slug them in the stomach, which of course is why we all play these games.

Biggest Gun Wins...

Isn't it always the way? But that's not a bad thing, because there's plenty of really big guns for you to get your hands on in Die Hard Arcade. It's one of those games where you can pick up the stuff that is lying around on the ground, and use it to fullest advantage in a fight. Weapons range from the obvious things like firearms, including pistols, machine guns, rocket launchers, and anti-tank rifles (oooh yes)... through to household items like bottles, chairs, barrels, and the amazingly deadly broom. The weapons are a bit weird, with the broom proving to be one of the nastiest items in the game, simply because of the way it seems to unerringly clout your opponent to the ground every time you take a swing.

Of course, much of the time you don't have a weapon handy, and you have to rely on your fists, feet and foreheads to overcome your adversaries. Unlike most of the games in this genre which had an appallingly low number of moves, there's all sorts of stuff you can do in Die Hard Arcade. There are a whole bunch of Street Fighter and Virtua Fighter style moves thrown in, which all come out as you do different things at different stages of attack. The coolest move you can pull off is the handcuff manoeuvre, which you need a pistol and an approach from the rear before you can do it (it's not as evil as it may sound).

The only real problem with Die Hard Arcade is the fact it's just too short. Sure, there's no way you'll be able to get through on the standard five credits, without tons of practice... but you'll get the extra credits in extra game, Deep Scan, and you'll finish it, and that'll be all. You do however get to beat up your partner at the end if you're playing two players, and that'll be a very pleasant trip down memory lane for any old gamers who were fans of Double Dragon.



AVAILABLE: MARCH

CATEGORY: BEAT EM UP

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: SEGA

PRICE: £99.95

RATING: M15+

VISUALS

82

Really nice animation and bright chunky graphics.

SOUND

60

Just a bit above average. The speech could have been a lot better.

GAMEPLAY

80

Lots of moves and gobs of fun, with only the occasional inconsistent glitch.

OVERALL

78%

A cool 3D beat em up, which is let down by its size. If it was longer, it would rule.

FREAKOMETER



Anyone can pick this one up and go wild. Non complicated fun.

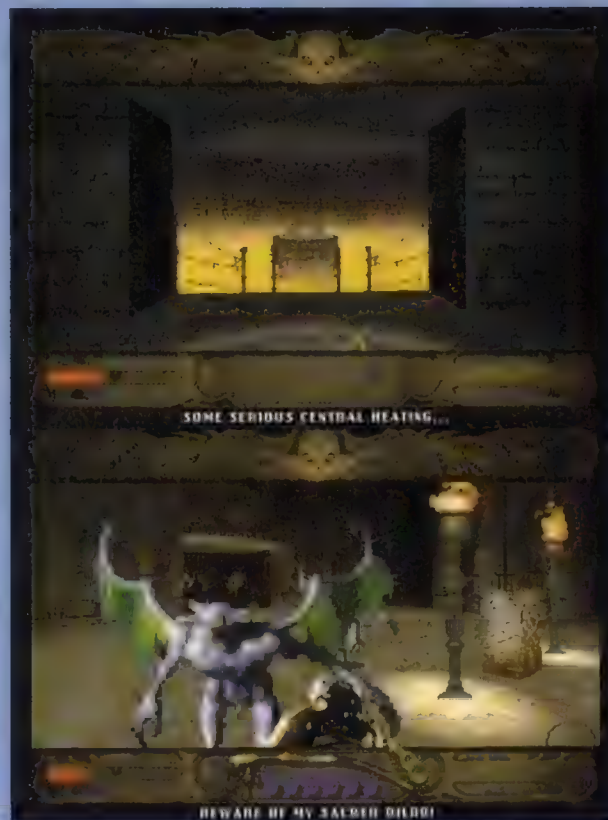
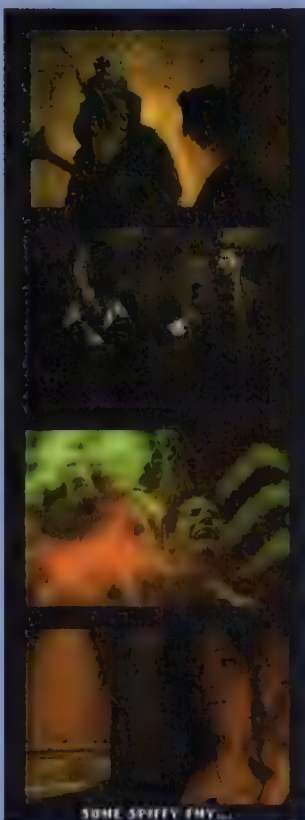
Realms of the Haunting

Realms of the Haunting... is it a Doom clone, a point and click adventure or a movie? DAN TOOSE decides.



WHAT'S IN THE BAG?

It's quite rare that a game has an impressive inventory system, but *Realms of the Haunting* is a rare kind of game. Your inventory screen not only allows you to access all the items you've found. It also lets you chat to Rebecca about them to help find their possible use. Not only can you keep track of items this way, but also of all the people you've come across, which is really handy for refreshing your memory on the important things that the characters of *Realms*. This makes the whole puzzle solving process that little bit easier to deal with, and thus makes it a more enjoyable game.



When one first looks at the box of *Realms of the Haunting*, the casual glance would lead one to believe that this was a *Doom* clone. However, a little more investigation and one soon realises that this one is actually some sort of adventure game. Upon opening the box and noticing that there are four CDs within, it's obvious that there's enough FMV in there to be compared to *Wing Commander*. So what is *Realms of the Haunting*? It's an adventure game with a *Doom*ish combat and movement system, that features FMV of key parts of the plot.

The closest thing you could compare *Realms of the Haunting* to would have to be *Strife*, the *Doom* game with a plot. However, *Realms*, is a much better game. *Damn, I'm lockin good...*

A lot of adventure games seem to work on the basis that using a bunch of beautiful stills is the way to set the scene. *Realms of the Haunting* proves that this is not always the best way to go. In the same way that people found games like *Doom* and *Quake* very creepy and atmospheric when they first played the game, *Realms of the Haunting* delivers that eerie environment that is essential for a "horror" adventure of this nature to work. Besides being atmospheric, the graphics are also quite detailed for a game of this nature, not do to resolution, but simply due to decent textures, which actually make things look like they should. The level design is great, with big halls having the sort of visual impact they should, and the simple, plain rooms near the front door of the house where this game starts, all being spot on for a spooky old house.

the creatures which you come up against are just low res sprites, but they're well animated and look the part nicely.

This is another one of those games where the audio department is both good and bad... with the sound effects and speech being great, and the music being uninspiring. Realms contains a huge amount of speech, with Adam Randall (that's you) passing comment on all the various items and things you look at. Even cooler is that once you find Rebecca (Adam's psychic ally), you can discuss all the items you come across, using her insight to better understand what's going on.

Doom with a plot?

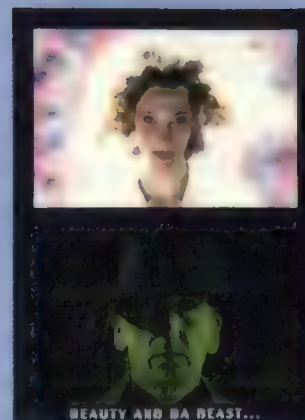
Like all good adventure games, Realms has a plot, and it's no less than the old "You gotta save the world" deal.

Your father was a priest, and you head off to this house where his soul is trapped. After a bit of puzzle solving and monster zonking, you soon realise that the game is going to be quite large, with the game taking place over 20 chapters, in four different realms, plus the "bit in between worlds".

To ensure this isn't one strictly for those into solving puzzles, the addition of the Doom-style combat is a really nice diversion. Anyone with even vaguely decent Doom skills should be able to overcome the various opponents, with ease... but it sure as hell beats just clicking on "use sword" and watching some boring animation of you dispatching an enemy, like you get in most adventure games.

Apparently there are twelve weapons to find in Realms of the Haunting, which is a lot more than your average Doom clone. There's also plenty of different types of adversaries to take on, which also helps keep the interest sparked.

There's really very little to complain about with Realms of the Haunting, the only even vaguely tiresome quality of the game is that the characters seem to spend a lot of time being, "atmospherically silent" during the FMV bits, rather than getting on with the plot. Watching Adam stare aimlessly into the shadows for ten seconds is a drag. This however is not enough to hamper the game's overall coolness, and I can do nothing other than recommend it as a good game for those into adventure games who want a bit of spice added to the game mechanics.



AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: ACTION

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: GREMLIN

PRICE: M15+

RATING:

\$89.95

VISUALS

88

Good textures and clever design make for lots of atmosphere.

SOUND

75

The speech and effects are great, the music is pretty average.

GAMEPLAY

92

The whole way the game is set out makes it a joy to play.

OVERALL

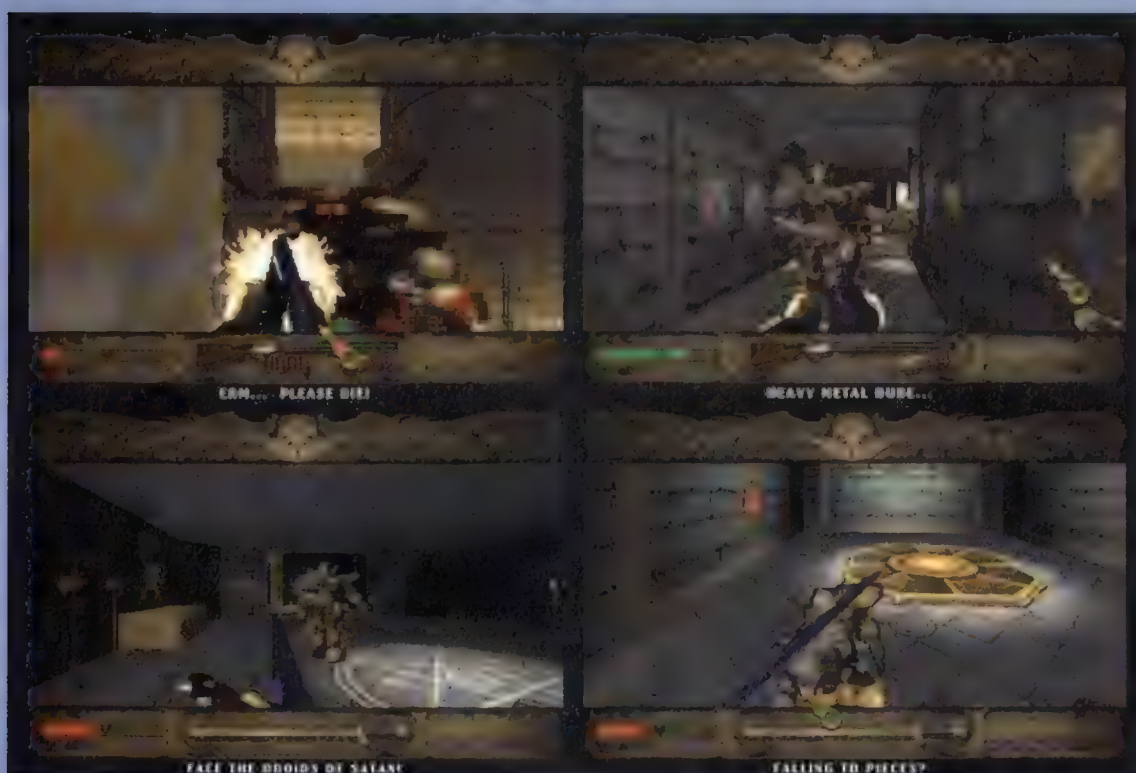
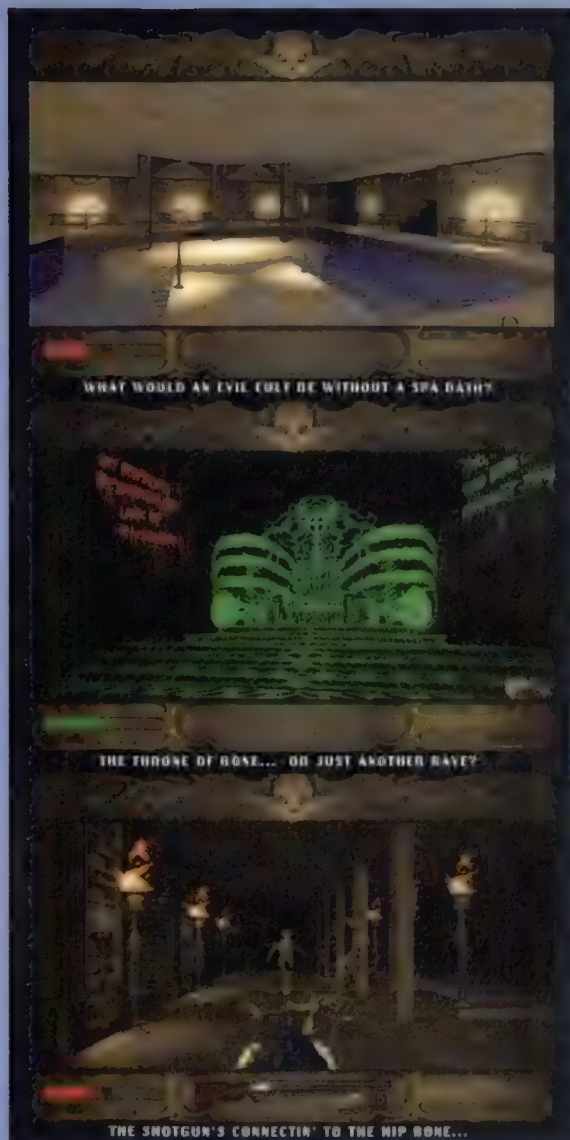
90%

Good elements of multiple genres all rolled into one... great stuff.

FREAKOMETER



You don't need to be an adventure game freak to appreciate this one.



Flying Corps

Flying about the countryside on a wing and a prayer is what GEORGE SOROPOS likes to do so we let him off his leash for this one.



"Dash it all Farnsworth, if Jerry's bullets get any closer they'll melt the wax right off my moustache! We have to get him off our tail."

"Righto Chuckles, I'll try giving him the brown eye, that should throw the Hun into a spin!"

"Jolly good show Farnsworth, remind me to recommend you for an O.B.E. when we get back to HQ"

"I say Chuckles, the Order of the Brown Eye, what an honour, mummy will be ever so proud."

Flying Corps takes us back to those times when planes were made of cloth and wood, no missiles, ejector seats or heated underwear, and when pilots were a special breed of men. A breed to whom fear was as unfamiliar as the inside of the ladies room at Harrods and as contemptible as a man who wears his wife's lingerie.

Two wings are better than one

The first thing you notice about the game is the designers' attention to detail, it even comes packed with a reprint of an original Flight Manual of the period, written by someone with a hyphen in their surname. There are also some nicely printed campaign maps which are actually useful too, as the terrain graphics are so good you can find out where the hell you are just by looking around! Detail is also obvious in the flight model used in the game, this is no arcade sim folks this is hardcore. The gyroscopic effects of rotary engines on aircraft flight characteristics have been implemented along with wind effects (important when your flying planes made from stuff you can buy in a craft shop) slipstreaming, torque as well as the individual eccentricities of each type of aircraft.



"GAD CHARLES! THERE'S AID'S COCKPITS FULL OF TORCHES..."

Computer is fast, planes are slow

Speaking of graphics, Flying Corps looks pretty darn good. All nineteen aircraft seen in the game have been rendered nicely and, as stated previously, the terrain graphics look fantastic. But these great graphics come at a price and if you're running it in Win95 you really wouldn't want to play this game with anything less than a P200 with 32MB, my P133 just couldn't hack it, even with all the graphic details set on minimum. To see Flying Corps at its best ditching out to DOS is the best option. However there has been a promise of a 3Dfx patch which should be available by the time this issue hits the newsagents, owners of these cards will have a very tasty flight sim indeed when the patch is installed.

The structure of the game is one that will be familiar to most flight sim fans, you can decide between single missions which involve reconnaissance, escort, intercept, patrol or ground attack elements. Or play one of the four campaigns which each highlight a different element of WWI air combat - ground support, air superiority etc. The first campaign has you playing the part of the Red Baron's brother with the aim being to exceed your siblings kill score before he gets back from his skiing trip to Bavaria. 'The Battle of Cambrai' puts you in the position of try to stall a British offensive by destroying their supply of pipe tobacco and protecting your own artillery from attack by air and ground units. The third campaign starts in the spring of 1918 with the player taking the part of a British pilot trying to slow the Germans at Amiens and the fourth has you in Eddie Rickenbacker's seat trying to better his kill total of 26 and becoming leader of his 94th 'Hat in the Ring' squadron.

Where's my pulse doppler?

The top gun pilots out there wondering how tough Flying Corps is should be impressed with its' AI. Your opponents are very skilled pilots and the tricky nature of flying WWI era planes adds even more to the depth of the game. Obviously there are no complex instruments to get a handle on but this cuts both ways and not having that information available to you can really make things tough in a fight. You'll have to rely on your peepers to spot targets, there ain't no Radar here! But there IS an autopilot feature to take away the tedious bits of travel time as well as a padlock view to keep your targets in sight.

Flying Corps is a well researched and put together piece of software. It does have a rather steep learning curve and requires patience to appreciate but for those flight simmers out there looking for a change of pace this could be just the thing. There is also a multiplayer patch coming soon which will really be fun!



I SAY ROGER... YOU'RE LOOKING FABULOUS FROM BEHIND...



I SAY ROGER, I HOPE MY SEAT BELT WORKS



I SAY ROGER, JERRY'S GOING DOWN...



I SAY JERRY, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU HIDE?



I SAY ROGER, WHAT'S THAT BUILDING DOING IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?

WOOD AND CANVAS VS. CARBON FIBRE AND HEATSEKERS

It's been quite a while since a noteworthy WWI flight sim hit the market, so long in fact that some of you may not have even played one. There is a world of difference between locking on to a target with Radar and firing off a load of missiles and fighting tooth and nail in a turning dog-fight. Players used to high speed jet combat will take a while to get used to the slow rate of climb and the fouchy handling of these old warhorses but the rewards here are in being able to stick to your opponents tail like glue, testing your flying skills to the limit.

AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: FLIGHT SIM

PLAYERS: ONE

PUBLISHER: EMPIRE INT.

PRICE: \$89.95

RATING: G

MIN REQUIREMENTS: WIN95 OR DOS6.0, P133, 16MB RAM

VISUALS

82

Fabbo terrain graphics make you feel like your really up there man!

SOUND

50

Unfortunately uninspiring

GAMEPLAY

79

Good fun for the hardcore sim fan

OVERALL

80%

A well produced game that will get better when all its patches are released!

FREAKOMETER



This is a hardcore sim, casual gamers beware!

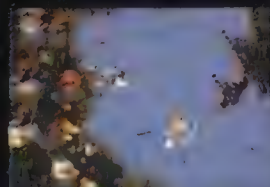
KKND

Krush, Kill 'N Destroy has been GEORGE SOROPOS' personal motto since he bought his first car so naturally he was the man for this job.

RED ALERT VS KKND

"Well I've already got one of these real-time combat thingies, why do I need another one?"

A valid question dear reader and I guess it all comes down to how much of a freak you are. The things I like more about KKND are mainly in the resource management/construction area. The fact that your oil tankers always go to one specific place (the oil rig) to do their thing means they're easier to defend than in Red Alert and leave you more time to worry about other things. The ability to order your facilities to build multiple units, or to build indefinitely is also a very cool time saving feature of KKND that should have been in Red Alert. There are no air or sea units to speak of in KKND however. The airstrike capability is limited to the sort found in C&C when playing the GDI, a range attack that comes after a timed period, and there are no helicopters! The other thing that KKND has over Red Alert is a sense of humour, which I found most refreshing.



RED ALERT



KKND



ZENKEN GOT THE TRASH...



OKAY, BUT WHERE'S THE RIVER KWAI?

Apparently some time last year the people at Beam Software realised that they were all wasting a lot of time playing Command & Conquer. It occurred to them that there might be something in this real-time strategy thing so they set their little minds to work on their own version, taking out the bits they didn't like and adding bits that they thought would make the game better. KKND is the end result of this exercise and now that Red Alert is firmly established in the marketplace with other titles (including another Australian product-Activision's 'Dark Reign') on the way, how does it match up to the competition?

Another Red Alert?

KKND's heritage becomes pretty obvious as soon as you boot the game up. The choice of two diametrically opposed sides, the FMV briefings, the interface, even the music, all these things scream C&C. Obviously most people interested in buying this game have probably already played C&C so I'll very briefly go over the details of the genre and then it's probably best if I just concentrate on the areas where KKND differs, improves and deviates from Westwoods' original.

The basic deal with real-time strategy games of this type is resource management and combat. Your job is to guide your chosen side's forces to victory by outmanoeuvring, overwhelming or squishing your enemy into the dust. You build your army using the money gained from, in this case, oil refining, develop new units by upgrading your construction facilities and then hope yours are better than theirs!

The story behind KKND is a familiar one - Humans blow up world, Some lucky humans (Military personnel, Politicians and Game Reviewers) get to hide underground in bunkers. These people are known as the 'Survivors' The not-so-lucky humans (Car Salesmen, Hairdressers and Gameshow Hosts) eke out a miserable existence on the irradiated surface, they prefer to be known as the 'Evolved' The two sides have their own skills when it comes to waging war, with the Survivors relying on the technological skills which they inherited from their ancestors while the Evolved, who look like they all come from Newtown, have a more feral, new age outlook.

Resources in this brave new world come in the way of oil wells which need to be exploited with a Mobile Derrick. Once your Derrick has been placed you'll need to get a tanker to transport the black stuff back to your refinery and you do this by building a power station. Every time you build a power station you get a Tanker truck, but don't panic about wasting all those stations if you want a lot of trucks because your bases don't use power the way that they do in C&C and Red Alert. Construction of units is also handled a bit differently, the 'build bar' on the right of the screen takes up much less space and so gives you much more play screen to look at, but the biggest difference is that you can build multiple units with one command simply by clicking on their icon as many times as you want.

Smarter than the average bear...

Your troops aren't dummies in KKND, they actually learn from experience going through two levels of improvement, making them tougher and more accurate. They also heal themselves over time so you can pull your better units out of battle and allow them to recuperate before throwing them back into the fray! KKND's AI also makes them smarter, enemy units will retreat when they know their goose is cooked while members of your army will take off on their own to wipe out any vulnerable enemies, returning to their previous position when they're finished. This is funny to watch!



AVAILABLE: NOW

CATEGORY: REAL TIME

PLAYERS: 1-2

PUBLISHER: BEAM

PRICE: £79.95

RATING: M15+

MIN REQUIREMENTS: PENT75,
WIN95, 16 MB RAM, SB
COMPATIBLE SOUND

VISUALS

84

The terrain looks great
and so do the units

SOUND

82

Voices are cool,
especially the way
they change when the
unit gains experience

GAMEPLAY

79

Too derivative to get
a huge mark here,
but still a lot of fun

OVERALL

82%

If you like real-time
strategy and are
sick of Red Alert,
KKND is for you.

FREAKOMETER



Real-Time strategy
is gaming pop
these days, no
freaks required!



ETERNAL DAMNATION
LEAVES PLENTY OF TIME
TO PLAN YOUR
REVENGE

"My Playstation is bleeding..." *Game Fan*

BLOOD OMEN
LEGACY
KAIN
COMING SOON



PlayStation

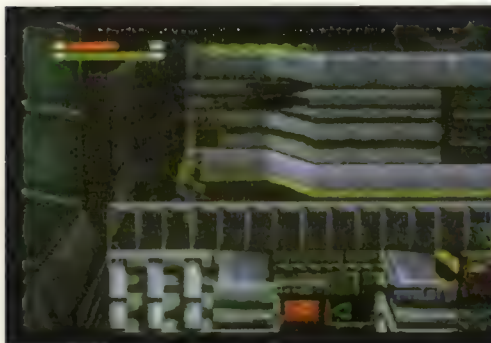
CRYSTAL
DYNAMICS

Preview the carnage at www.bmg.com.au

MA15+

Incredible Hulk - The Pantheon Saga Playstation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: BEAT 'EM UP
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: EIDOS
PRICE: \$99.95
RATING: GS+



Incredible Hulk is a scrolling beat 'em up, and not a particularly inspiring one. Three Dirty Dwarves on the Saturn provided an amusing and unique twist on such a well-worn theme a couple of months back, so even though it wasn't a legendary game, it did at least prove that there were a few new avenues to take in this tired genre. Unfortunately, however, for our green friend in the purple jeans, his game expires well before anyone can arrive to offer resuscitation.

The animation has to be THE dodgiest seen yet in a Playstation game. Hulk can perform a fair number of moves (punch, kick, uppercut, shoulder barge, plus the obligatory special moves), but he seems to do them all within the space of a couple of frames. The collision detection is just abysmal. You can take damage from enemies without them appearing to touch you. Of course, this is balanced out by letting you do exactly the same thing. You can step off the edge of a crate and walk around in mid-air for a few seconds before falling. Did I mention walking? The floors of every level must be made of ice, since Hulk slips and slides everywhere he goes. Or else he's just practicing his moonwalk. None of the objects in the game have shadows, which is pretty sad for a 3D game. There are several sections where the corridor is blocked by laser beams and you have to time your run to get past. Except, because there aren't any shadows, you can't actually see precisely where the beams are. Or where the flying robots are, either. Oh dear, I seemed to have died because of PROGRAMMER STUPIDITY!

The level design is obvious and insulting, consisting almost entirely of simple button-next-to-door conundrums. All in all, Incredible Hulk looks and plays like some tedious third-rate 16 bit game. Which just leaves me room to tell you about the really good bits...

DAVID WILDOOSE

VISUALS	20
SOUND	34
GAMEPLAY	20
FREAK	99
OVERALL	25

Cruisin' USA Nintendo 64

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: ONE-TWO
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G



It's a time for firsts on the N64, first 3D platformer, first fighting game and first driving game. Cruisin' USA did big business in the arcades, for some unknown reason, and because of that Nintendo made what was probably a bad decision to adopt it as the N64's first racing title.

Cruisin USA (or cruise t' Noosa as it's known here) is a very dull game, I won't pull any punches here folks - it's boring as all poo. It's pretty arcade perfect I guess but that doesn't mean sh't as the arcade game sucked hard anyway.

You're offered the choice of four cars to race across the USA in: the Italia P69, the Devastator VI, La Bomba and the '63 muscle car. Each performs slightly differently with some accelerating quicker, some having better top speed or cornering ability. The latter doesn't really matter that much anyway as the cars don't actually corner in this game they just waddle around the corners. That's what I hate most about Cruisin USA - no powerslides!

The graphics look nice but they are very repetitive and 'boxy' and sure as hell don't push the N64 to anywhere near its limits. Why did Nintendo choose such a crap game to be the first racing title on its' hot new machine? Beats the hell out of me! There are a lot of other arcade titles of this kind which would have looked much better on the N64. The other thing that Cruisin USA does to the detriment of its' host machine is show how crap its' audio capabilities are, USA's sound is dreadful. I hope Nintendo do something to address this problem as good audio really does make a difference to how a game feels. Oh well that's my N64 gripes out now, I'm sure there will be heaps of drop dead gorgeous games out eventually for it but Nintendo should have been a bit more on the ball with some of its' early titles.

GEORGE SOROPOS

Toshinden URA Saturn

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: 3D FIGHTING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: TAKARA
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: M15+



When the Playstation first came out, Battle Arena Toshinden didn't seem that bad did it? Well, since then we've seen the likes of Tekken 1 & 2, Virtua Fighter 1 & 2, Fighting Vipers, and more... and everyone has a fair idea of what's good and what's not. Why then does Takara bother to make a game like Battle Arena Toshinden URA for the Saturn? Toshinden URA is essentially Toshinden 2 on the Playstation, except with a couple of different characters.

The first thing Takara decided to do was to go high res. This might not have been such a bad idea, had it not affected the game speed so dramatically. The one good thing about the original Toshinden was its fast pace, so to take it away was ludicrous. You'd think the frame rate would be reasonable if the game speed was cranked down, but there's nothing particularly fluid about anyone's movements in this game.

Okay, so let's forget the graphics for a sec and concentrate on gameplay. Well, after finishing the game without loss of a round on my first go, I proceeded to do the same thing with the new character I unlocked. I then recalled you needed to finish Toshinden 2 on the highest difficulty to unlock something, so I thought I'd give it a try. Well, after finishing it on the hardest difficulty without losing a round, I really didn't need to look at the game much further. Anyone could have done what I did, all they needed to do was figure out how to do a simple fireball move and just keep doing it over and over. This may not have been quite as easy had I have picked a less powerful character, but that in itself is just another sign of poor game design, having an imbalanced bunch of characters to pick from.

One has to wonder why Sega let their logo appear within the game, as it's really not worthy of the brand that has been responsible for some of the best fighting games ever.

A complete disappointment from Takara, one would have expected them to go forwards rather than backwards. Wait for Fighters Megamix or buy Virtua Fighter 2 instead.

DAN TOUSE

VISUALS	75
SOUND	55
GAMEPLAY	60
FREAK	20
OVERALL	65

VISUALS	63
SOUND	58
GAMEPLAY	30
FREAK	10
OVERALL	47

Versailles 1685

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ADVENTURE
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: CRYO
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G



Remember Kings Quest? (Which one doesn't really matter) Now you should be thinking on some poor lowly dude wandering around a strange place getting different objects and using them for other their original purpose. Right, well this is the same idea, but it has a real king, and this time someone is trying to kill him. If that was it, this game wouldn't be worth picking up, but luckily those clever folks at Cryo have followed the fine French tradition and given us a game with a high "Wow, that's real neat." factor. It appears that Cryo must have employed a bunch of game designers that were total history buffs, as Versailles is practically oozing history to an almost uncool level (unless of course you love French history).

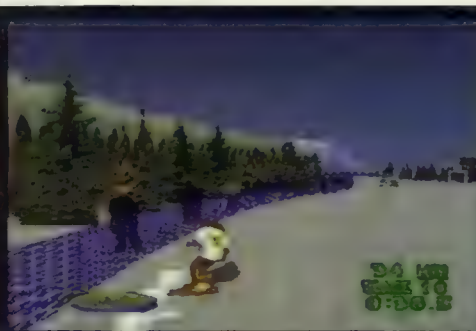
The whole game is set in the grandiose palace at Versailles. From the Salon of Apollo to the Hall of Mirrors and the gardens, all these areas and many more are used in different stages of the game. Each room is fully rendered in 3D, and can be fully viewed. Clicking on one of the two hundred odd pictures and statues will give you a better look, and the title, along with the name of the artist, their favourite colour, and what they did last Tuesday. This is very nicely complimented by over ninety minutes of classical baroque music, and the scene is set very nicely (if you go in for that style of music). The other historically correct part of the game are the characters, or should I say snivelly, petty, back stabbing, immoral, butt kissers with which you have to deal, and that's just the nice ones. Combine this with your character being a bedchamber boy, and you spend half your time running errands when all you want to do is find clues, solve puzzles, and get your day off in one piece.

All in all this game is one for the oldies, or the French history freaks, although you could claim it was research, or homework, and your parents would probably believe you.

ROSS CLARKSMITH

2Xtreme Playstation

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PLAYERS: 1-2
PUBLISHER: SONY
PRICE: \$79.95
RATING: G+



A year is undoubtedly a long time in videogaming. In February last year I was being (extremely!) thoroughly entertained by a little thing on the Playstation called Extreme Games. Today, I'm playing its sequel, 2Xtreme, and I'm (extremely!) bored out of my mind. You see, the thing is that Extreme Games now looks terribly dated when compared to the likes of Wipeout 2097 or even Jet Rider, and because little in the way of enhancements have been undertaken for 2Xtreme, it also looks decidedly ordinary. In fact, in many ways it is much worse. Given that Sony have had over twelve months to make some - ANY! - kind of improvement, this is a disappointing state of affairs.

2Xtreme, then, is a racing game. All the competitors are kids in (extremely!) baggy shorts and bruises on their elbows. They race on skateboards, rollerblades, mountain bikes and, introducing, snowboards (replacing the street luge from the first game). The tracks are really really really (extremely!) long and are chock full of obstacles and bonus gates. Your ability to kick has been ditched, leaving only a punch to hamper your opponents' chances. The best thing about Extreme Games were the long, flowing bends that made most of the tracks such a speedy and smooth joy to race along. The tracks in 2Xtreme, however, seem wider and littered with too many (extremely!) inconveniently placed fences, tyre walls, etc, which means that the skill is in dodging the obstacles rather than negotiating the turns of the track. Each race becomes too stop-start, apparently designed to annoy instead of challenge. And the graphics are RUBBISH.

When it comes to videogames, if you stand still for any length of time, you'll fall way behind very, very, (EXTREMELY!) quickly. The last time I saw 2Xtreme it was fleeing a mob of irate peasants some time during the middle ages.

DAVID WILDBOOSE

VISUALS
80
SOUND
88
GAMEPLAY
78
FREAKYNESS
87
OVERALL
78

Cricket97

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: SPORT
PUBLISHER: EA
PLAYERS: 1-2
PRICE: \$69.95
RATING: G



Cricket is one of those evocative words that brings forth memories of summer like no other, the roar of the crowds, the gentle sound of leather on willow and the not so gentle sound of a full coddie hitting the back of someone's head. Not so evocative was EA's last Cricket effort C96, which was OK for a bit of a tonk but lost its appeal rather quickly. So what's new in '97?

The first and most obvious improvement are the graphics. Gone are those poorly proportioned giant Cricket players, replaced by a more realistic looking field and more detailed player animations. The other obvious additions to the game are Richie Benaud and Ian Botham, both adding their well known cricket voices to the action and helping create a bit of atmosphere too, after all what's a Cricket match without the sound of Richie's voice somewhere in the background. Batsmen will be pleased to know there are now a few new shots for them to play, sixteen in all, and there are also a few new deliveries for the bowlers including the famous flipper.

The obvious omission is the fact that there are still no official licensed teams with players names that you would recognise, this however was not because of a lack of will on the part of the developers (Beam) but because there are over thirty Cricket boards around the world responsible for various teams and the task of licensing from all of them proved to be too much of a hassle.

Unfortunately the game still has one of its forebears major problems, it's still way too easy to hit boundaries and ridiculously hard to deliberately hit ones and twos. This makes playing Cricket97 a bit like playing a Baseball game, but the opposition fielders don't catch everything you hit within a 50 meter radius of them anymore, which is something I suppose. Cricket97 is a big improvement over '96 but really, it still has a way to go before it can compare with EA Sports' other titles in terms of quality and realism.

GEORGE SOROPOS

VISUALS
65
SOUND
80
GAMEPLAY
60
FREAKYNESS
80
OVERALL
60



A wizard's protege.
A deranged jester.
And you. It's gotta be
Pandemonium.

Pandemonium!

Preview this and all our games at www.bmg.com.au



**CRYSTAL
DYNAMICS**



Sega Rally

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: RACING
PUBLISHER: SEGA
PLAYERS: 1-2
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G



Before I got this game the only release I had for my rally driving urges was to go down to the mall parking lot, spray a bit of sump oil around, and spend the rest of the day playing dodge the pram in my old station wagon. Unfortunately for the mall patrons I didn't dodge many, but I did do my bit for population control and give the mall cleaners something to do so it wasn't a total loss. Now that I have Sega Rally though I can do it all at home, which is good because I was getting sick of pulling pram wheels out of my radiator grill.

For those that aren't familiar with the Saturn game I guess the closest comparison would be Virgin's Screamer 2. Sega Rally doesn't have as many tracks or cars as Screamer2 but it does have its' advantages over that title. Rally's SVGA graphics run faster, so people with P120-133's (like me) can get sexy looking graphics while at that Mghz Screamer will really only run in VGA. The driving model in Rally is also a bit nicer, although that is probably a matter of taste and others may not agree with me.

Sega Rally offers two types of race, Arcade and Timeattack, for the player to enter. Arcade is the championship game where you get to race all three tracks, hopefully making your way up through the field of 15 cars to eventually be the winner at the end. Timeattack mode takes place on one track, over three laps or as many as you want, and basically pits you against the clock. This mode is notable for the fact that you can tweak your cars a little (suspension, gear ratio's etc.) to make 'em go faster. You can also use these hotted up numbers in multiplayer racing, whether it's split screen, IPX or on the net (One cool thing that the Saturn can't do!)

GEORGE SORODOS

VISUALS
82
SOUND
75
GAMEPLAY
85
FREAKYNESS
30
OVERALL
81

Panzer Dragoon

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ARCADE/ACTION
PUBLISHER: SEGA
PLAYERS: ONE
PRICE: \$89.95
RATING: G



What happens when you put a funky looking dude with a laser rifle thingy on the back of a house trained fighting dragon? You get Panzer Dragoon of course. Sega have been busy with a bunch of PC conversions lately, Virtua Fighter, Sega Rally, Baku Baku and now this little gem, arguably the best of the lot.

The gameplay in PD is pure arcade shoot-em up but implemented in an original and rather enjoyable way. Panzer Dragoon is structured like a lot of arcade/console action games in that it's based around sprawling levels of progressively tougher opponents, with each level culminating in a big boss dude. Where Panzer flies off on a tangent is the actual way you go about fighting your opponents. Enemies come at you from all sides, above and below and it's just as important to use your view control button as it is to use the fire button. View control pivots your targeting sight, and view of course, around at 90 degree intervals and makes it easy to hit critters sneaking up behind or to the side of you. Your weapon cannot be powered up or souped in any way but it does do a good trick of turning into a guided, multiple targeting laser blaster if you press and hold the fire button instead of just squeezing it feverishly.

The one advantage that PC Panzer Dragoon has over its' console cousin is in the graphics options. On a P133 PC Panzer will run quite smoothly in 8 bit 600 X 480 mode, or in 16 bit colour on a fast P166, both modes making it look much sexier than the Saturn original. Panzer Dragoon, for me, is a great way to break up a session of more intense gaming, a good diversion and a great bit of fun.

GEORGE SORODOS

VISUALS
85
SOUND
78
GAMEPLAY
80
FREAKYNESS
10
OVERALL
84

Tunnel B1

PC

AVAILABLE: NOW
CATEGORY: ACTION
PLAYERS: ONE
PUBLISHER: OCEAN
PRICE: TBA
RATING: G6



What do they mean by "jokes about Bananas in Pyjamas and dark tunnels"? Eh? Not being the type of person whose mind is constantly full of lewd suggestiveness, I don't understand such innuendo at all. If only George was here right now, I'm sure he could explain it to me.

Tunnel B1 is purportedly a manic action game. You are the pilot of an unnamed high-speed craft, thrust into a thrilling ride along a network of twisting, intertwined tunnels, like a phallic symbol in full flight. There's some evil bastard dictator with a fearsomely large weapon that could wipe out the entire planet with one tonk. So, it was generally considered a reasonable idea if you tried to stop him. By yourself. With only a machinegun. Grrr.

Quite why the world has, in the future, decided to arrange itself into a series of roads flanked by towering walls is mystery that doesn't bear thinking about. It does make for a pretty exciting gaming environment, however. It is for this reason that some learned people have already labelled Tunnel B1 as a cross between Descent and Wipeout. Unfortunately, this is a bit misleading. If you try to scream along the roads of TB1 at a pace similar to Wipeout, you die, basically. The better tactic is to creep forward, making sure you take out the enemy copters and gun installations from a distance. The Descent comparison is flawed, too. Thanks to its truly 3D 3608 environment, Descent is disorienting, scary, and utterly paranoid. Since there's only one way to go in TB1, with the occasional fork in the road, and you begin each level with a complete map, there's little chance for you to be even surprised at what you come across (let alone being scared).

Tunnel B1 is a solid, playable game, but its thrills are shortlived.

DAVID WILDCOODE

VISUALS
84
SOUND
75
GAMEPLAY
70
FREAKYNESS
45
OVERALL
71



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GAMES ONLINE

MARIO 64

Bowser/Koopa has once again snatched the Princess from her royal kingdom. So begins yet another Super Mario adventure, which is without a doubt the most thrilling yet. Obviously the ultimate goal in the game is to rescue the Princess from the clutches of Bowser. To do this you must make your way through many different courses which are accessible through different rooms in the castle. You must collect a certain amount of stars in each course to proceed higher up into the castle, and into the further stages of the game.

Each of the 15 courses contain 7 stars. There are also 15 bonus stars to be found. This makes a total of 120 stars in the game. You don't have to find "every" star in a course to proceed to the next course, however if you find all 120 stars, you will get to see Yoshi, but more on that later.

GENERAL TIPS

- To reach high platforms, you must perform a triple jump or a backflip.
- To use the cannon on any course, you must first talk to the pink cannon-ball dudes. After you talk to them, they will open the cannon hole for you. You will then always be able to use the cannon on that particular course. (The cannon ball dudes are normally pretty easy to locate. The harder ones will be pointed out to you by this guide.)
- To beat the rotating eyeballs in the ghost stage, run around them in circles, as close to them as possible. Do this rapidly and they will spin themselves out.
- When you are low on energy, find some water and jump in it. Stay in it until your energy is fully replenished.
- When you are sliding down the slippery dip sections, you can control your speed with the analogue stick. Push forward to speed up, back to slow down.
- To get some of the stars in the game, you will need to use some of the power-ups such as the winged hat, or the liquid metal suit. So make sure that you go to all of the switch palaces and activate all of the switches as soon as you are able to. This will activate the power-ups.
- Most enemies in the game can be killed with a simple punch, kick or butt-stomp.
- Kill enemies by jumping onto them for an extra high jump.

COURSE GUIDE

Since collecting stars is what this game is all about, here is a detailed guide locating all 120 stars in the game!

Course 1

STAR 1: Climb to the top of the large mountain and beat the bomb boss. (Pick him up from behind by pressing the B button, and throw him 3 times, (by releasing the B button). Don't throw him off the mountain or he will sustain no damage.)

STAR 2: Race the large turtle to the flagpole at the top of the mountain, (where bomb boss was) and get there before the turtle does.

STAR 3: On the air island, in the yellow box, (use cannon to get up there.)

STAR 4: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 5: Fly through the 5 gold rings near the air island and collect the centre coins. (Use the cannon on air island. You will need the winged hat power-up to get this star.)

STAR 6: Butt stomp the post that the big, black chomp monster is chained to, 3 times. He will open the gate behind him where the sixth star is.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.





Course 2

STAR 1: Beat the large stone boss at the top of the mountain. (Stand in front of him and quickly move out of the way when he tries to fall on you. Butt stomp him when he is flat on the floor. Do this 3 times.)

STAR 2: In the tower at the very top of the mountain.

STAR 3: Use the cannon to shoot yourself to the platform underneath the tall flagpole. Climb down the small pole on the platform to get the star.

STAR 4: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 5: In a cage in the air, near the other floating islands. (Use the owl in the tree where you start the course. Jump and grab onto it (by simply holding down the jump button), and fly over the island with the star, then drop onto it.)

STAR 6: Next to the cannon, there are 2 brown brick walls on each side of the inclined piece of cement in front of the water. Shoot out of the cannon onto the top right corners of these walls. They will break off, and the one on the right has the star.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 3

STAR 1: Swim around the course until the giant eel swims out of the ship. Swim into the ship through the hole the eel was sticking out of. Open the 4 chests in this order: chest farthest from you, chest on your right, chest closest to you & chest on your left.

STAR 2: Swim to the giant eel, and collect the star on his tail.

STAR 3: Swim through the tunnel near the ship, and you will end up in a cave with 4 chests at the end. Open the chests in this order: chest farthest from you, chest on your left, chest on your right, chest closest to you.

STAR 4: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 5: Shoot yourself out of the cannon onto the tall spike on the left that is sticking out of the water. (Shoot onto the top of the spike or Mario will slide off it.) Climb to the top of the spike, and jump onto the ledge with the star on it.

STAR 6: You need to have activated the green switch for this one, so you can use the green block power-up to transform you into liquid metal Mario. Once you are liquid metal Mario, quickly jump off the ledge into the water, and collect the star over the rising bubbles.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 4

STAR 1: Jump on top of the house where you begin the course, and go down the chimney. Finish the race down the slide to get the star.

STAR 2: Take the baby penguin down to the big mama penguin. She will give you a star.

STAR 3: Go down the chimney in the house at the start again. The big mama penguin will be there to race you down the slide. Beat her and get a star.

STAR 4: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 5: Race the big snowball at the top of the mountain, down the mountain to the other snowball on the stand. Beat it and stand next to the snowball on the stand. The other snowball will crash into it and form a snowman. Talk to the snowman for a star.

STAR 6: Go to the cannon hole directly to the left of the big mama penguin. Shoot out of it to the tree on the other side of the mountain. It is surrounded by a fence and has another cannon hole next it. Follow this path up to the star. (To get up to the high platform, do a double jump off the wall.)

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 5

STAR 1: Kill as many small ghosts as you can until a big boss ghost appears outside in front of the mansion. Beat the large ghost for a star.

STAR 2: Go into the small out-house in the courtyard, and down into the room with the spinning floor. Kill all the small ghosts until a large ghost boss appears. Kill it to get the star.

STAR 3: In the mansion, go upstairs into the room where the

small books fly at you. In a bookshelf there are 3 books sticking out. Hit them in this order to get the star: book on the top, book on the right, book on the left.

STAR 4: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 5: In the mansion, go upstairs into the room on the far right. There is a platform you can stand on. If you get on this platform and look up, you will see a higher platform. Use a double jump off the wall to get to it. Go through the blue double doors near the blue star box in the ground. Beat the ghost outside. The star will appear on the roof. To get the star, jump to either of the small ledges on the side, then jump to the centre ledge with the star.

STAR 6: Get the blue box power-up to make Mario transparent, then quickly go up to where the blue star box in the ground is (from star 5). Instead of going through the double doors, go through the ghost painting in the wall. Beat the eyeball for a star. (To beat any eyeball, just run rings around them and they will spin themselves out).

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 6

STAR 1: Explore the level, go through the area with the huge rolling boulders, and take the elevator down to the water area where the blue "lochness" monster is. The star is in the middle of the island in the water. (Climb onto the monster's head and steer him to get to the island. Steering is easy. Face right and the creature will turn right, face left and he will turn left.).

STAR 2: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 3: Just when you get off the elevator in the "lochness monster" area, there is a green block power-up. Get it, then as liquid metal Mario quickly run to the flat "I" switch under the water. This will open the red metal bars guarding the door in front of the switch. Go through the door, the star is ahead.

STAR 4: Go into the room with the hole in the floor that leads you to the yellow fog area. Before you drop down into the yellow fog area, look at the map on the wall. The DOWN arrow is your starting point. The UP arrow is where you can get out. The three blue circles are ledges that you can back-flip or double jump on to. Jump up to the ledge corresponding to the second blue circle from left. Go through the door there, it will lead you to the star.

STAR 5: Same as star 4 except jump to the ledge corresponding to the blue circle on the far left. You need to jump and travel across the grating to get the star, or just long jump to it. There is no door on the ledge corresponding to the blue circle on the right. Another way to find these ledges is to hit the blue star box in the ground and follow the blue coins.

STAR 6: Go to the room with the huge rolling boulders. Stand directly below the area where the boulders are emerging from. There is a large arrow painted on the wall, pointing to the door to the right. Look up and you will see two ledges high up on the walls, on each side of the door. The star is on the ledge on the right. Use a double jump off the wall to get up there.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 7

STAR 1: Find the big bomb monster, and push him into the lava. (Try using a butt-stomp when he is right near the edge.)

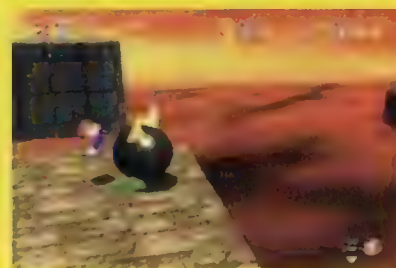
STAR 2: Go to the island with three small bomb monsters on it. Push them all into the lava, and a big boss will appear. Push him into the lava for a star.

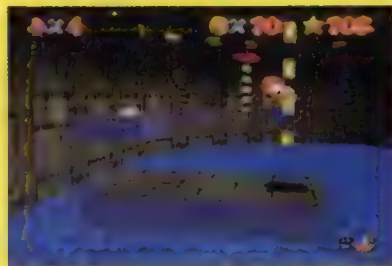
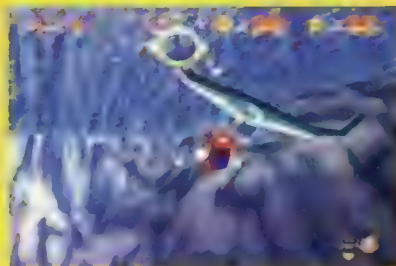
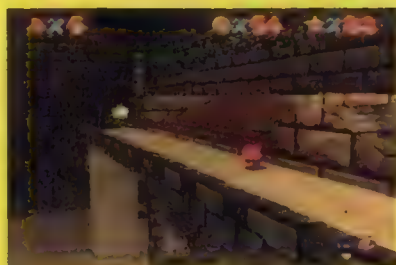
STAR 3: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 4: When you just start this level, walk straight ahead until you reach a stone arch that you walk under. To the right hand side of the arch, you can see an area with walls of grating. Go to this area and use the log to cross over to the island against the grate. The star is there.

STAR 5: Find the volcano in this level, and jump into it. Follow the pathway until the top. The star is there.

STAR 6: Again jump into the volcano. This time go in the opposite direction to the pathway you took before. Jump onto the moving platform you will find. Climb to the top and you





will reach the star.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 8

STAR 1: There is a pool of water next to a palm tree and some tall columns, next to the pyramid. Go there, look up and you should see a bird flying around with a star. Hit the bird and it will drop the star.

STAR 2: On the outside of the pyramid, near the top there is a small crevice with the star. To get it you can simply follow the path leading to the top of the pyramid, or fly up using the winged-hat power-up.

STAR 3: Go inside the pyramid and make your way to the top.

STAR 4: Go inside the pyramid. There is a red building in the centre. On the side of the red building there is an opening. Climb on top of the red building, then drop off the side that has the opening in it. You must try and grab on the ledge of the opening as you are falling. It is quite difficult. Once you make it, go inside and beat the boss. (Punch the eyes while they are open to beat him.) A much easier way to get into the red building is to walk up, and stand on the top of each of the 4 columns surrounding the outside of the pyramid. (You may have to fly to the top of one of the columns since it is surrounded by quicksand). When you have done this the top of the pyramid will blow open, allowing you to enter this way.

STAR 5: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 6: Find the 5 special gold coins inside the pyramid. 2 of them are on the moving sand bridge, the other 3 are in the centre of small square platforms higher than the sand bridge.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 9

STAR 1: It's on top of the submarine.

STAR 2: Where you begin the level, there are 4 chests surrounding a whirlpool. Open them in this order when you are at the tunnel looking at the whirlpool: chest to the left and behind the whirlpool (next to pink clam), chest to the left and front of the whirlpool, chest to the right and behind the whirlpool, chest directly in front of the whirlpool. Get the star.

STAR 3: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 4: In the room with the submarine, there are bubbles emerging from the floor which send up rings. Swim through 5 rings in a row and a star will appear over the bubbles. Use liquid metal Mario to get the star.

STAR 5: The giant ray will leave rings behind as he swims. Swim through 5 in a row to get a star.

STAR 6: In the room with the submarine there is a red gate with a star on the floor under the water. Quickly get the blue box, and green box power-ups and run to the star.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

Course 10

STAR 1: The first star is at the top of the mountain. Find a place where speedbumps are emerging from. Jump above it and follow the path to the top of the mountain. (Walk beside the big penguin to block you from the wind.)

STAR 2: Find the platform with the big ice-boss on it. Knock him off the platform for the star.

STAR 3: There is a star in a maze-like, ice-structure near to your starting point, when you just begin the level. Get the star.

STAR 4: Go to the area where the speed-bumps come at you. Jump on the head of the helicopter guy who is in the water (or emerging from the water) to launch you into the air. Fly over to the platform across the water. The box on the left contains a star, the other box has a turtle shell.

STAR 5: Find all 8 red coins.

STAR 6: As with star 4, fly over to the platform with the star and the turtle shell. Get the turtle shell, and slide up the ramp with coins, that is next to the moving speed-bumps. At the top is a fence with an igloo behind it. Crawl in, and get the blue box power-up to get the star in the maze.

STAR 7: Collect 100 gold coins.

cheat mode

Just a note to those of you desperate for a particular cheat, that are coming to us for help, we aren't the ones that do the cheats! See that logo and phone number down the bottom of the page? UGH... Those guys are the experts. They're all set up to take any cheat inquiry you might have, whereas we at Hyper are unfortunately way to busy trying to churn out the mag to be able to address individual cheat inquiries. We do our own Playguides, but we don't actually ever bother using cheats unless we need to review a game in such a short period of time that we need to skip to later levels to give you pics of different stuff. Why are we telling you this? Well we get a lot of mail asking asking for help, so we thought we'd start saving you 45 cents, and point you in the right direction.

Hellbender

PC

CHEAT CODES

Enter any of these during the game:
TOTLPWR - Makes main energy 100%
URDEAD# - The # represents a weapon from 0 - 9
MAXMEUP - Makes the hull 100%
IMPUMPD - All weapons!!!
AUNTEM# - Warps to the planet 1 - 8
IMSTUCK - Skips the current mission
STERIOD - INVINCIBILITY!!!

Necrodome

PC

TANTIOCH - Kills all opponents in the current level
TCAMELOT - End level
TEXCALIBUR - Gain all weapons
TGIMMESOMESUGARBABY - Gain all weapons & items
TIGOTBETTER - Gain full health
TKNIGHT - Toggle God mode
TRABBIT - Gain full shields
TRUNAWAY - Fires all weapons
TSHRUBBERY - Gain all items
TSMALLROCKS - Unlimited ammo
TUNLADENSWALLOW - Unlimited fuel
TWALLOW - Refuel

Greed

PC

CHEAT CODES

Type in the code during game:
ALLAHMODE - God mode
BEAVIS - Skips ahead to 100 points from level finish
BELFAST - Kill all enemies
GULLIVER - Shrinks all your enemies
KMFDM - Full ammo
OMNI - Full map
RAVEN - Full health

Spiderman: Separation Anxiety

PC

Enter one of these passwords at the pre-game prompt to leap ahead in the action:

DCCPMH
MDRKJP
STSPPC
QPMJCV

Afterburner 3

Saturn

ARCADE MODE

To play the original arcade version of this game, wait for the title screen, then press **A + C + Start** on Controller Two. To insert a coin, press **Left Shift**.

OPERATOR SCREEN

Enable Arcade Mode then hold **X + Y + Z + Start** on Controller One. This will allow you to change the difficulty level, the number of credits etc.

Sim Copter

PC

UNLIMITED FUEL

While playing, press **Ctrl+Alt+X** and type "Gas does grow on trees".

ALL COPTERS

For access to all the helicopters, type "123456789" in the hangar.

INVINCIBILITY

While playing, press **Ctrl+Alt+X** and type "Shields up".

FASTER FLIGHT

While playing, press **Ctrl+Alt+X** and type "superpowermultiply". To use your newfound speed, hold **Shift**.

Monty Python and the Holy Grail

PC

Type **URANUS** at the screen just after you start a new game to travel anywhere immediately.
 Type **LOBSTERGIRL** at the screen just after you run away to get at the hidden sub - game.

Skynet

PC

Hold **ALT** and **N** at the same time to be able to enter these codes during the game:

SUPERUZI - Get the Super Uzi
ICANTSEE - Shows viewscreen
SNIPER SHOT - Shows your name
WHOAMI - Shows current co-ordinates
ILLBEBACK - Skips mission
ARNOLD - All Weapons

Master of Orion

PC

CHEAT CODES

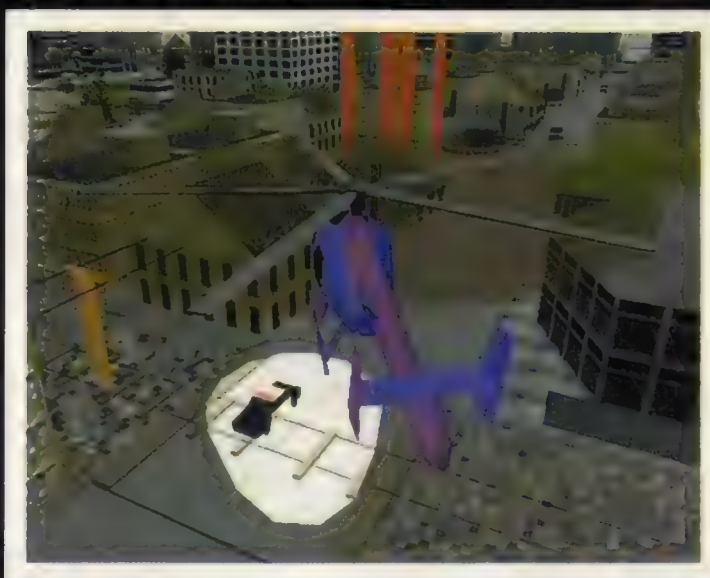
Hold down the **ALT** key while entering these codes:
GALAXY - Scout the entire galaxy at once
MOOLA - 100 BC

Mortal Kombat 2

Saturn

CHEAT MENU

Go to the Story Screen and press **Down, Up, Left, Left, A, Right, Down, B, Y, C**. A new menu selection will appear on the start screen.



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Sega 1902 555 444

Master of Orion 2

PC

CHEAT CODES

Hold down the ALT key while entering these codes:

MOOLA - 1000 BC
MENLO - Gives you a Robo Miner
EINSTEIN - Gives you all tech
ISEEALL - Reveals entire galaxy map

Earthworm Jim 2

Saturn

Enter any of the cheat below with the game paused:

Extra Energy - Left, A, Z, Y.
Extra Lives - Y, A, Right, Down, Down, A, Left, Right.
Full Energy - Left, A, Z, Y, Down, A, Y, Down.
More Homing Missiles - Y, A, U, X, C, Left, Y, Up.
More Machine-Gun Ammo - A, Up, Down, Right, Right, Left, X, C.
More Nuke-Gun Ammo - Y, A, X, Up, Right, Right, Left, Up.
Plasma Gun - C, A, Right, Right, Up, Down, Up, Left.
Three-Finger Gun - Down, A, Up, B, Right, Right, C, Right.

Loaded

Saturn

CHEAT MENU

Pause the game and highlight the "BGM Volume" option. Press and hold these buttons in order: Left Shift, Z, B, X, C, Right Shift. A Cheats menu will appear where you can skip levels, increase ammo, power, and lives. Highlight one of the options and press C rapidly to increase its number.

Sonic 3D Blast

Saturn

CHEAT MODE

At the title screen hold Up/Left + A + C and press Start. The "Press Start" text should stop blinking. To use the codes, pause the game while playing and press any of the following keys:

A - Skip to next Act
B - Skip to next Stage
C - Skip to the final boss
X - Gain 1 life
Y - Gain 1 medal
(10 medals = 1 continue)
Z - Gain 1 Chaos Emerald (need 7 for the best ending)
NB: You can only get up to 9 medals with the cheats. You must earn every 10th by conventional means (that means do it yourself!!)

Destruction Derby

Saturn & Playstation

INVULNERABILITY

Enter your name as "IDAMAGE!"

NUMBER OF OPPONENTS

Enter your name as "NPLAYERS" to choose the number of computerized opponents.

EXTRA TRACK

Enter your name as "REFLECT!" Also on the SATURN, in a 2 player game, enter your name as RIDGERACER to race on the RidgeRacer track.

Impact Racing

Playstation

PASSWORDS

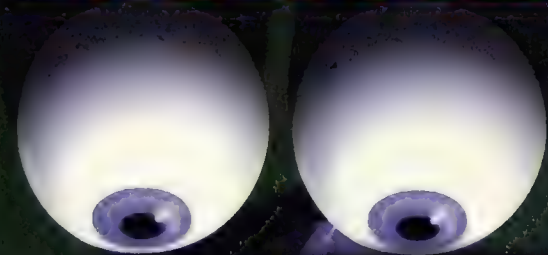
All Weapons - ALL.TOOLEDUP
Bonus Level - BONUS.LEVEL
Hidden Tracks - ENDGAMELEVEL



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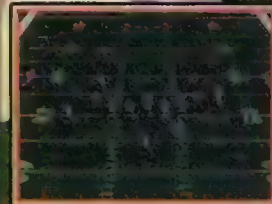
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Blast Chamber

Playstation

INFINITE LIVES

At the main menu screen press **□**, **Left**, **□**, **Right**, **○**, **Down**, **○**, **Up**. In the games menu choose Sole Survivor mode. Return to the main menu and begin your game.

Street Fighter Alpha 2

Saturn

SECRET CHARACTERS

Follow these procedures on the Character select screen:

Evil Ryu:

Highlight Ryu and hold Start for one second. Next move to Adon, Akuma, Adon, Ryu. Finally, hold Start and press any button.

Original Dhalsim:

Highlight Dhalsim. Hold Start and go to Zangief, Sagat, Charlie, and back to Dhalsim. Press any punch or kick button to become Original Dhalsim.

Original Zangief:

Highlight Zangief. Hold Start and go to Sagat, Sodom, Rose, Birdie, Charlie, Dhalsim, Ryu, Adon, Chun Li, Guy, Ken, and back to Zangief. Press any punch or kick button to become Original Zangief.

Super Akuma:

Highlight Akuma. Press Start then let go. Go to Adon, Gen, Sakura, Rose, Sodom, Dan, Guy, Rolento, Sakura, Rose, Birdie, then back to Akuma. Press and hold Start then press either the punch or kick buttons.

Super Chun Li:

Highlight Chun Li, press and hold Start then press either the punch or kick buttons.

Impact Racing

Saturn

PASSWORDS

Invincibility - **I.AM.IMORTAL**
Unlimited Ammo - **LOADSOFTUFF**
(NB: you must include the colon)

3D Lemmings

Playstation

LEVEL SELECT

Enter the password "LAMPWICK", highlight END and press **X**, the message "PASSWORD CORRECT" will appear. Choose a difficulty level and select PLAY. A Stage Select menu will appear.

VIEW FMV'S:

Enter these passwords at title screen:
Space - **SPACEAAA**
Egypt - **EGYPTAAA**
Military - **ARMYAAAA**
Secret - **MAZEAAAA**

Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain

Playstation

Enter these codes while playing:
Blood Refill - **Up, Right, □, ○, Up, Down, Right, Left**
Full Magic - **Right, Right, □, ○, Up, Down, Right, Left**
VIEW ALL VIDEOS
Left, Right, □, ○, Up, Down, Right, Left. Then press Select and view the Dark Diary.

Desctruction Derby 2

Playstation

ALL TRACKS

Enter the password "MACS+POO"

NBA: IN the Zone 2

Playstation

On the title screen, have the cursor on start, press and hold **Li+Rz+Select+Start** until screen fades out. You will then be able to select the All Star Team. (In exhibition mode only)

Virtua Cop 2

Saturn

SKIP TO LAST BOSS STAGE

At the stage select screen shoot the stage 1's arrow continuously until the time is up. You should go to the last boss stage directly.

WEAPON SELECT

This was activated by a cheat in Virtua Cop but comes standard in the sequel:
Go to the options screen 2, and set weapon select on. When you play the game, pause it, and with the gun, shoot out of the screen, and you can select ANY weapon you want!

World Wide Soccer 97

Saturn

SOME TRICKY LITTLE MOVES

Back Flick - While running, press **Back, Forward** then **b**
Side Step - While running, press **Right, Right** or **Left, Left**

Toy Story

SNES

INVINCIBILITY

In level one, walk over to the dresser with the army barrel on top and jump into the first open drawer. For invincibility, hold **Down** until your star begins to flash and spin.

Demolition Man

MegaDrive

To warp to any level, pause the game and press **Left, Right, A, B, B**.

Madden 97

MegaDrive

CHEAT CODES

To enter these codes, choose Front Office on the main menu, then select Sign Up to enter the player creation screen. Enter one of the following codes as your player's name. Enter whatever you wish for the other stats.
OVERPAID - No Salary Cap
HAPPY DAYS - An all 50's & 60's team
DISCO - An all 70's team
NEW WAVE - An all 80's team
ITSINDGAME - EA Sports team
BOOM - All Time All Madden team
Press Start to enter the point distribution screen. Distribute the points as you please, but all available rating points must be used. To finish, save the character you've created.

NB: If you've activated a new team (e.g. Happy Days) you'll have to begin a new game and select them from the list of teams.

SOUND TEST

Turn on the game. When the screen with Madden appears, press **C, A, C, A, C, A, B**. A Sound Test menu should appear.

NBA Live 97

MegaDrive

BONUS PLAYERS

Go into **THE ROSTER SETUP** and select **CREATE PLAYER**. Enter the last name and that player's



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attributes should automatically appear on the screen. The following is a list of programmers from the EA Sports development team. Just remember they're programmers when you're cursing their ball skills.

Amory Wong
Robert White
Sheila Allan
Mark Soderwall
Brian Wideen
Michael Vanaselja
Michael Klassen
Dan Scott
Sam Nelson
Allan Johanson
Traz Damil/Sean O'Brien
Brian Krause
Brent Nielson
Novell Thomas
Marcus Lindblom
Aaron Grant
Ed Fletcher
Dave Warfield
Steve Royea
Casey O'Brien
Dom Humphrey
David Bollo
Al Murdoch
Cindy Green
Crispin Hands
Stan Chow
David Laviolette
Sebastian Reinartz
Daryl Anselmo
Ivan Allen
Renata Antonic
Tarrnie Williams
Daniel Ng
Zoe Quinn
Ernie Johnson
Adam Mackay-Smith
Jeff Mair
Kim Gill

Pocohontas MegaDrive

To prevent the guards from shooting you, enter the password: **Bear + CHiPV**
To view the full ending, enter the password: **Wolf + GLRSN**

Sonic 3D Blast MegaDrive

LEVEL SELECT

At the "Press Start" screen, press **B**, **A**, **Right**, **A**, **C**, **Up**, **Down**, **A**, then press **Start**. The level select menu will appear when you begin a game.

LEVEL SKIP

Enable the Level Select code, then start a new game. To skip to the next level, pause the game and press **A**.

EASY EMERALDS

Enter the Level Select code twice. Select any stage that has Tails or Knuckles in it (even the first stage will do). Get 50 rings and visit Tails or Knuckles. When the special stage begins, press **A + Start** and you will receive the emerald for that course.

Spiderman: Seperation Anxiety MegaDrive

LEVEL SELECT

Enter the password: **SCBCRS**
NB: You return to the Level Select screen when you die.
If you really want to finish the game try these passwords:
Level 4 - **DCCPMH**
Level 8 - **MDRKJP**
Level 12 - **STSPPC**
Level 13 - **QPMICV**



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TOTAL HARD CORE GAMES

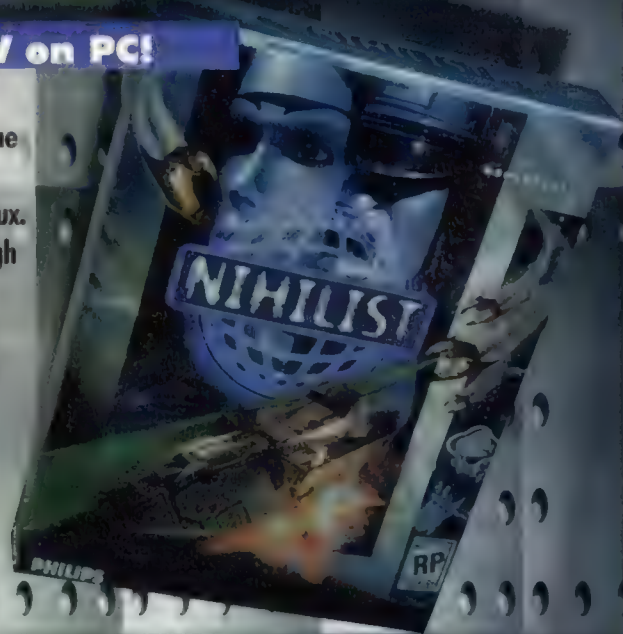


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Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3 SNES

SOUND TEST

At the title screen, press
Left, Down, Y, Y.

KOOL STUFF MENU

At the title screen, press Right, Up,
B, B, A, Down, Up, B, Down, Up, B.

KOOLER STUFF MENU

At the title screen, press Up, B, A,
Left, Down, Y.

SCOTT'S STUFF MENU

At the title screen, press B, A, Down,
Down, Left, A, X, B, A, B, Y.

Make sure you check out the Sound
Test screen after you have entered
the other codes for extra violence
amongst other things.

Street Fighter Alpha 2 SNES

SUPER TURBO CHUN LI

To play as Chun Li from the Super
Turbo edition, highlight Chun Li and
hold Start for about 6 seconds. Now
press any button and release Start.

PLAY IN AUSTRALIA

To play with a home crowd go to
Versus mode. When you arrive at the
stage select screen, pick Sagat's
stage, hold Start for five seconds,
then press any button.

PLAY IN THAILAND

Go to Versus mode. When you arrive
at the stage select screen, pick
Bison's stage, hold Start for five
seconds, then press any button.

SELECT VICTORY POSE

To select your winning pose, hold
Start + Select plus any other button
after defeating your opponent.

Alien Trilogy PC

Type these in during gameplay (no
need to pause)

Unlimited ammo -

ifyouthinkyouarehardenough

All weapons - comeandhaveago

Level warp (where XX is 01-34) -

nadiapopovXX

NBA Live 97 Playstation

CHEAT MENU

At the Game Setup menu press L1,
X, X, L1, X, □, R1, X, □, R1, O.
Next hold Up + Right + △ + □ for
about two seconds. Another screen
may appear while you're entering
the code. This is normal. Finally,
press Start to load the game and
hold L1 + R1 + Up + Right + △ + X +
□ + O until the game is loaded. If
you did this right you will enter a
secret cheat menu.

Here's how to use it:

1. L1 and L2 control player height in
inches. (Note: Any height greater
than 7'10" cannot slam the ball.)
2. Up and Down control chameleon
mode.

3. Start and Select on Controller One
turn outdoor mode on and off.

To return to the game, hold △ + X
on Controller One.

Daytona Championship Edition Saturn

MIRROR MODE

To play any track in reverse, hold
X + Y + Z while selecting a track.

Rise of the Robots Playstation

HIDDEN FIGHTERS

Enter these codes at the character
select screen.

Assault - Right, Up, Up, Right,

Down, Right, Up, Up.

Mayhem - Left, Right, Down, Left,
Up, Left, Down, Left, Down.

Vitriol - Left, Left, Left, Up, Up,
Down, Left, Left, Down, Down.

Donald Duck starring Maui Mallard MegaDrive

PASSWORDS

Level 2 - ININIA

Level 3 - ILVMUD

Level 4 - ITSHOT

Level 5 - GETHIM

Level 6 - YOHOMO

Level 7 - UNDEAD

Level 8 - GOLUCK

WWF In Your House Saturn

SUPER PINS

With these pins in your arsenal your
opponent will be soon be begging
for mercy

Bulldog - D,U,P,SK,SP,K

Undertaker - D,U,P,SK,SK,SP,SP

Ahmed Johnson - D,U,P,SK,SP,K

Bret Hart - D,U,SP,D,U,SP

Vader - D,U,K,K,K,K

Owen Hart - D,U,P,P,K,K

Goldust - D,U,SK,D,U,SK

Shawn Michaels - D,U,P,SK,SK,P

HHH - D,U,SP,SP,SP,SP

Ultimate Warrior - D,U,P,P,P,K

Rise of the Robots Saturn

PLAY AS VITRIOL

To play as the hidden fighter Vitriol,
press Right, Right, Right, Up, Up,
Down, Left, Left, Down, Down at
the fighter-select screen.

WWF Royal Rumble SNES

FIGHT YOURSELF

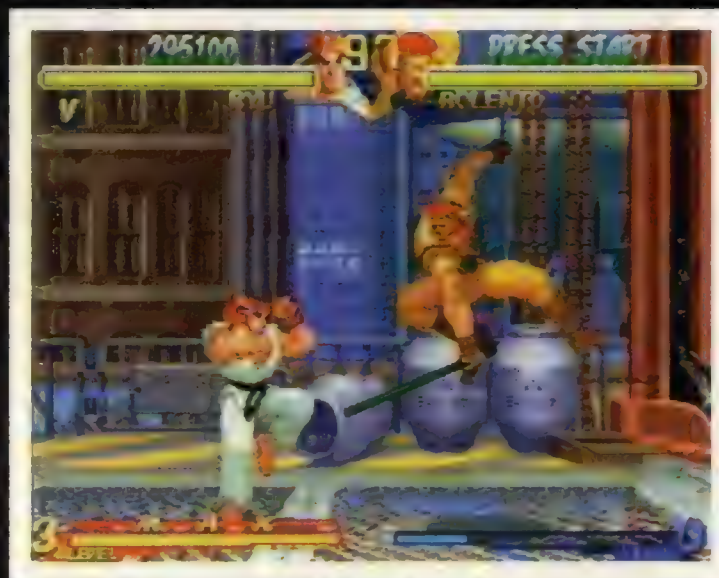
At the Wrestler Select screen, press L
to stop the logo. Next, hold L + R
buttons to make the background
move again. Continue to hold both
buttons and press Select. Now, use
the Selection Screen to choose the
same wrestler.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

This easy trick enables you to slow
down the background on the
Wrestler Select screen. When the
Wrestler Select screen appears, press
L once. To stop the screen
altogether, press L twice. To speed
the background up, press R once. To
make it go super-fast, press R twice.

SUPER PUNCH

Here's an easy trick that gives your
wrestler's a secret Super Punch move.
Wait until the legal screen begins to
fade, then press B + Y. If you hear the
word "Ugh," the trick worked and
your wrestlers are in business.



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SEGA SATURN

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DOOM

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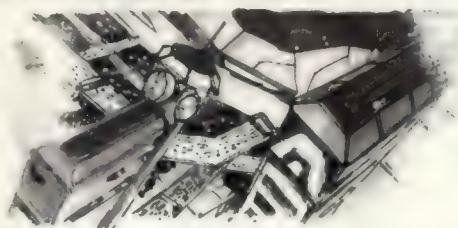
Thanks to all of you that send letters in every month... we get gobs of mail, and it's unfortunate we can't print all the letters we get. To help your chances of getting in... we don't want to print any more console war mail for a while, and we don't do cheat requests, or "what should I buy?" requests.

As of next month, 26 RED will most generously be sponsoring the letters pages, and will be giving away clothing prizes to the best letter each month... so don't forget to include your address on your letter as envelopes go astray. Thanks for your support, all of youse!

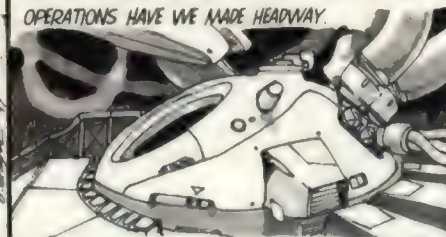
HYPER» E-mail:

freakscene@next.com.au

LIKE ALL GREAT REVOLUTIONARIES, I TOO HAVE A DREAM
- ONE WHICH CAN CHANGE THE PATH OF OF THE HUMAN REALITY.
FRONTIERS SUCH AS THE SEA & SPACE HAVE BEEN CONQUERED
- EVEN THE STRANGE WORLDS WITHIN IT?



WE AT TAKANATSU SPECIAL INDUSTRIES HAVE
DEVELOPED HARDWARE TO INTERGRATE THE HUMAN
PSYCHE A MACHINE ENVIRONMENT. AUTHORITIES HAVE
TRIED TO STOP US IN THE PAST - ONLY BY COVERT
OPERATIONS HAVE WE MADE HEADWAY.

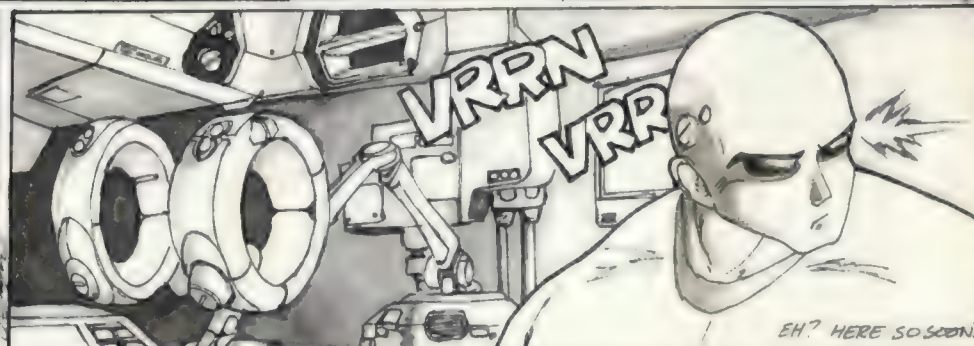
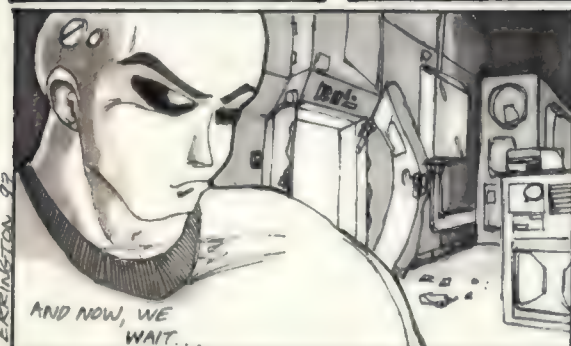
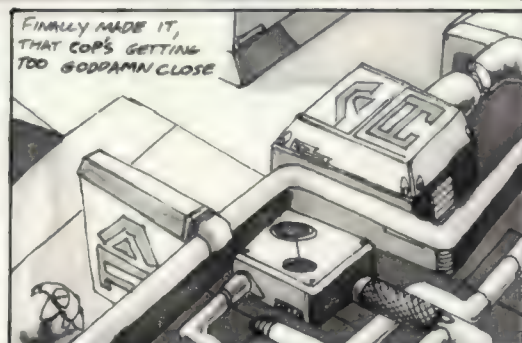


THE PROJECT MUST CONTINUE BY ANY MEANS FEASIBLE.
PLANS HAVE BEEN MADE TO "PROCURE" A SUITABLE
TEST SUBJECT, AND THESE ARE BEING PUT INTO
ACTION AS I SPEAK...



RANDOM ACCESS

MR TAKANATSU'S HIRELING, RAM, ATTEMPTS TO LURE OFFICER TAG DEEP INTO THE HEART OF THE T.S.I LABORATORIES, WHERE HE WILL BE THE FIRST SUBJECT OF TAKANATSU'S EXPERIMENTS INTO THE REALM OF GAMESPACE. SHOULD THIS WORK, TAKANATSU WILL HAVE THE PERFECT MEANS WITH WHICH TO DO AWAY WITH ANYONE HE PLEAS...



AGREE TO DISAGREE

I had to laugh at the review of Destruction Derby written by George Soropos in issue #39. He opened with an opinionated lashing on the original game (OK George so you hated Destruction Derby fair enough, but some people did actually enjoy it). Next up he informs us about just one of the NEW features in the sequel (DD also had four modes of play).

Come on! You guys get paid to play these games and you continuously churn out half hearted & misleading words of wisdom. How long did you give the game? How can you dribble out an exact percentage rating on the long term of this game when it's only been out a short while?

After getting the wheels, panels etc added to the collision shrapnel you ask for even more (what would make you happy George? An option to be on of the pit crew and ability to build your car bolt for bolt). It's a video game??? Stop all the technical frame rate and polygon counting bullshit and have some fun.

I buy Hyper on a casual basis and am almost always exposed to biased reviews such as this, if you enjoy a game, the practice and perseverance can make the gameplay. I read a review so that I can get some idea of what a game is about and George did cover some interesting points, but next time keep your own personal opinions to yourself and tell us more about the game itself (for all we know you might just hate racing games altogether?)

Split screen racing is for the Super Nintendo, you guys are just too selfish. I bet that within 10 mins of playing 'Monster Truck Rally' poor old George will get frustrated and throw the game on the pile so that he

can sit and wait for the next package to arrive.

BARRY JAMES

Geelong VIC

Keep his personal opinions to himself? A review is an opinion. A few people seem to get the idea that George is some sort of racing game hater, and this is not the case. In the same issue he gave Screamer 2 a very positive review, and you'll find he explains why he thought it was a good game.

Technical things ARE important, and when it comes to racing games, how well the cars handle is really important... It's not something I'd expect younger readers to immediately understand, since they probably haven't had the opportunity to drive a car around corners at stupid speeds in real life. For many gamers, having it handle right is a determining factor in whether or not it's any fun for them. Many people find racing games that have lots of "extreme effects" dull, since the emphasis is placed upon big crashes and jumps, rather than actual racing... And some people love it. You really shouldn't be so upset if someone doesn't share your opinion.

As for us being biased, I'd really like to see you justify that statement. You'll notice no particular system consistently has high review scores. Last issue the N64 games were very strong, this issue only Turok did particularly well. Last issue, PlayStation had a pretty bad issue, but they've come back with some high scores this issue. Last issue the two Saturn titles were both winners, this issue, all but Die Hard Arcade scored low. There's no reason for us to be biased... What on Earth would be in it for us? And no, George won't be reviewing Monster

Truck Rally... We try not to have a reviewer do two games from the same publisher in a row, so there's no bias. The exception being me reviewing lots of Saturn titles, seeing as the only two contributors owning Saturns are myself and Nino.

BE HAPPY DAMNIT!

I've been reading your mag ever since Issue 1, and thought it was great, especially due to the coverage of all formats, and it was great to see some of the ex-Megazone crew were still in business.

Anyway, I wrote in to complain (D'OH!). I used to love reading the letters section, but recently all that seems to be in there are the same old questions like "which super console should I buy?" or people paying out other consoles.

People, wake up and use your heads! Make up your own minds! After all, what's the use of buying a console on someone's recommendation only to find the only releases are fast action games when you're into RPGs and vice-versa?

And why slag off other consoles? Just be happy with consoles you've got. If you want all the games (and you've got a few thousand dollars lying around) my advice is you buy a powerful PC (since the best Sega and Playstation games will be on it) and an Ultra 64 (I agree with a previous writer, Ultra 64 sounds much better than Nintendo 64).

On to the questions:

1. Which 3D accelerator cards will have the best support? Which cards will Sega, Id, Psygnosis, EA and Origin support?
2. I have Pentium 150 with an 8 speed CD-Rom drive and 12 meg of RAM. How long before I have to upgrade?
3. Is there any news on an X-Files game?

4. Would I be able to handle NBA Live 97 on my machine? I haven't seen it anywhere.

CYBERMOOSE.

Thank you Mr Moose, I'm exceedingly tired of the letters asking us for such advice. Of course I have an opinion on what the answer should be, but it'd be extremely bad ethics for me to say so, since as you said, people may buy it on my word and then be disappointed... And it would also be the equivalent of me "siding" with one of the console companies, which is exactly what Hyper is NOT about.

Your answers:

1. Well, to speak for all those developers is very hard, but the 3DFX cards (like the Righteous 3D - Orchid) are definitely being catered for by Psygnosis and Id. I've been playing the 3DFX beta version of Quake at home, and it's pretty damn spiffy.
2. You need to upgrade NOW. Only because of your RAM, since most games now need 16 MB. The rest of your gear should be more than adequate for a while.
3. Nothing since last we heard, which was nothing much then either.
4. More than likely, except it may require 16 MB of RAM. It should be out there, harass your computer store manager.

HE'S INTO CORDS

Dear Hyper,

First of all, I'd like to thank Hyper for producing a great mag each month.

Secondly, I have three questions I'd like you to answer (please):

1. What is 'Sony Computer Entertainment Australia's address?
2. Will the Nintendo 64 use the aerial cords and channel like the SNES or will it use the AV cables and channel like the Sony Playstation?

3. What cords and channel does the Sega Saturn use?

Thank you for your time and keep up the good work,

MILLHOUSE

Your answers Millhouse...

1. SCE, 11-19 Hargrave St, East Sydney, NSW 2010.
2. Should be AV cables, like the American and Japanese machines.
3. It comes with an RF cable, which unfortunately is no where near as good as an AV cable, so it's highly advised you buy one with your Saturn.

DEFENDING THE BIG N

Dear Hyper,

I've written to you guys in response to the first letter in issue #40 ("N64 - Not worth the Hype"), which was sent in by Stuart Van Eysden. Stuart, your letter contained some really intelligent points in it. True, the N64 isn't a great leap forward in gaming technology when compared to the 32-bit consoles and yes, most of what the N64 could do could be reasonably yourself slightly on one or two points. In the last paragraph you're quoted as saying "...the extra bits doesn't justify selling a super console to go out and get one (a N64) ...". Now from this I'm assuming that you think that Nintendo expect people to trade in their recently attained Saturns and PSXs and fork out the money for a new N64. Well Stu, that has to be the most stupid thing I've ever heard. Obviously, if you've just spent around \$400 on either of these two machines you're not going to want to sell them and get a N64! It's too late (and I don't mean that in a negative sense), you've just bought a great new games console already. What about all the people who still own a Mega-Drive or SNES and have either waited to check out all the

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systems or simply haven't saved up yet? What about an extra 48-bits, incredibly enhanced sound and a Star Trek-like control pad. I've waited and I feel that the N64 is the best system for me, even though the other two super consoles are very impressive as well. The N64 IS worth the hype... Especially if you've been living in 16-bit land for so many years.

ANON

That really is the sum of things... Not many people go and trade in their consoles to buy others consoles (except going from 16 to 32 bit). Those that do are usually those with a selection of games that isn't really them, and is frustrating them into wanting something else. The amount of money one would lose in selling their 32 bit machine may not be worth it (unless you find a real sucker), and you're probably better off saving up for a N64, rather than getting back less for what you paid for your 32 bit machine.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

Dear Hyper, You seem to be going on and on about this censorship thing lately. But I mean who really cares? Anyone with a brain will already have been ordering their games from England for some time - simply because you save 20% at most of Australian prices. So if Australian games are now going to have

some ridiculous censorship restrictions placed on them, it's an even bigger incentive to order from overseas. The dopey Australian censors are just going to hurt the local games industry - not the players. Try censoring my British games Mr. Dopey Oz censor, doh!

MAX DE BATES

NSW

Erm.. Max, is right. So I really do hope the OFLC read this. You can do what Max here does, and write to the OFLC and let em know that you're doing it as a result of their lack of an R classification.

YOU MIGHT BE A REDNECK.

Dear Hyper

I am a proud PC owner and a newcomer to the Hyper mag and I think it's the best mag in the world. In issue thirty nine you reviewed Destruction Derby 2 for the Playstation. I have played the PC version and I am really pissed off. Now I don't know about you but I have had a hell of a time unlocking the bloody tracks since its impossible to even finish a race without getting smashed up. I mean what were the programmers thinking, that we were all pro drivers that always come first. In your review of Monster truck Madness you seemed to be obsessed with one word. REDNECK! What the hell is a redneck.

Now to the questions.

1. Is Dark Forces 2 on the

market yet? Is it any good?

2. I have seen a Mercenaries preview and I would like to know apart from new mechs and graphics what's the difference to Mech 2.

3. When will Wipeout 2097 be on PC

4. I am looking for a long lasting action shoot 'em up game. Any suggestions?

ROHAN BERRY

Grovedale VIC

See... Someone who doesn't find getting smashed up all the time a big novelty. As for what a redneck is, it's an expression used to describe stupid hicks from the Southern states in America.

Your answers:

1. Not quite yet, will be soon. And it should rock very hard indeed.

2. Very little... Nothing MAJOR in terms of gameplay... Just tweaks.

3. The words Spring 97 have been used... This should mean Spring 97 in the UK, which means any time in the next three months. It will also take advantage of 3DFX, which means it will look much sexier than the Playstation version.

4. Your question isn't very specific. If you're after a Doom style game, Duke Nukem 3D, Hexen or Final Doom will be the longest lasting single player challenges. Quake is the best bet for longterm multiplayer value, with dial in servers catering for some awesome online multiplayer action. The Doom genre is the only really strong shoot em up style of games that could be classified as shoot em up action. Tomb Raider is a good game, but might not have enough combat for your liking.

HOW DID HE KNOW?

Dear Hyper,

Instead of putting in my two cents worth in the 'My machine is better than yours debate, I want to congratulate each and every one of your staff and contributors for the wonderful job they do in keeping HYPER at such a high standard. All of your news articles are well presented and much appreciated, as apart from your articles, there isn't many other places that a would-be-buyer can learn whether or not a certain piece of hardware or other item is crap or not. I've noticed that some of your previews have given a game a good rap, but you have to apologize when the game turns out to be a stinky puddle of regurgitated dog food. This is totally understandable as with

many of the games you preview, you guys have only seen about the best few minutes, or even seconds of what the game has to offer. No matter what some people might say, I cannot detect bias towards a particular platform as much attention as possible, but sometimes you just can't - because of deadlines or lack of support from their companies. I find all of your reviews for any game on any platform informative and intuitive, and, more often than not, worthy of a few chuckles, particularly the caption (if all the cars in your front yard aren't mobile, but you house is... You might be a redneck). This is not lip service but I just wanted to give you all a big hug and kiss to say thank you very much for doing such a great job. Now a question:

1) Any news about "X-Wing vs TIE Fighter?

THE HITMAN

My god! Someone who understands. If it all weren't so true, it might be mistaken for sucking up... But it's true. Sometimes we preview games from text only, and have to go find some screen grabs somewhere. We don't like to say anything too harsh in a preview, since we've at that stage not had too long to look at it to make any informed criticism. Please don't let this be a cue for all of you to butter up to Hyper, but it's nice to know someone out there understood... Thanks.

1. Yeah, should be out sometime in May... and it will be rock.

I WANT ANSWERS... NOW!

Dear HYPER,

I won't blab on about how good the mag is because you already know it. Anyway, I've just got a few questions to be answered:

1) Are you reviewing Mega Drive games anymore?

2) Why are there only a couple of Saturn games reviewed and heaps for the Playstation?

3) Why isn't Nights listed in the 'Hottest games in Australia' page for?

4) Is Tomb Raider worth buying?

5) Is Sega going to come out with a 64 bit machine?

Thanks for ya time.

AMELIA, TAS

1. Not really... We might do one in a blue moon, but we can't dedicate much space towards old technology that is being phased out, we as a magazine have to look to the future of gaming, not the past. We know lots of folks still enjoy playing with their

Mega Drive, but Sega certainly isn't putting any real effort into the machine anymore and that sort of sums it up really.

2. The reason is, we get more Playstation games sent to us than Saturn games. A perfect world for us would be if we got an even amount of games for all systems, but that doesn't happen. Unfortunately a lot of Saturn games never make it out of Japan, since they're deemed to be aimed specifically at the Japanese market.

3. I don't know, why don't you ask whoever does it?

4. Depends.. If you can't afford to eat for a week if you buy it... Then no, but otherwise... Yes.

5. There's been no confirmation or even teasing rumours from Sega on this one, but to be competitive against the Nintendo 64, one could guess that Sega might put the Model 3 board (the guts of a Virtua Fighter 3 machine) into a box and viola! Super console. Of course at this stage the Model 3 board is worth a packet, so unless they could do it cost effectively, that might be quite a ways off yet.

SOMEBODY LOVES ME!

To the Rulers of Games Reviews who gave the legend Dan Toose a job: Hyper!

I'm just an ordinary PC gamer who loves Duke Nukem 3D, Doom, Doom 2 and Quake. But I'm highly disappointed about Duke and Quake. What I like about Doom 2 is the monsters high and low. And the many different corpses lying on the floor. I mean, Quake and Duke have better sound and graphics. But I miss the arch viles frying ya butt! Duke Nukem doesn't last long. I got through it in days. Quake is the same. Not many monsters, stupid guns and takes a little longer to finish.

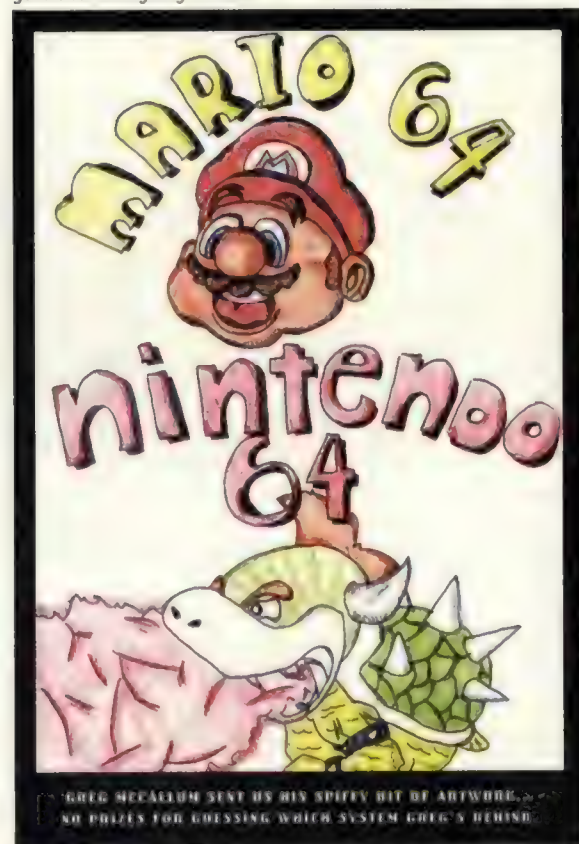
Do you know if there's a game coming that has the monsters of Doom 2, the sound and graphics of Quake and the humour of Duke Nukem 3D?

And would Dan Toose be able to reply?

DARREN ROWE

The Hyper Fan!!!

Well, after that initial lip to buttocks job at the beginning, I guess to answer your question I'd have to say no. Games developers are (if they're smart) very careful about releasing clone games, since you really have to do an amazing job, otherwise you won't grab any interest at all. Personally I really like the

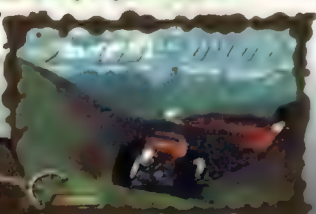


GREG MCCALLUM SENT US HIS SPIFFY BIT OF ARTWORK. NO PRIZES FOR GUESSING WHICH SYSTEM GREG'S BEHIND.

MONSTER TRUCKS



ROUGH RIDER



play'n
dirty.



PC
CD
ROM



G

monsters in *Quake*, especially the fiends and death knights. They're the only monsters in a game of this style (besides *Turok*) that actually take melee attacks at you with true 3D weapons/limbs, which is not so much a good thing because of visuals, but more in terms of the fact you can actually make an informed attempt at dodging a blow. And yes... I reply to all the letters now.

TOILET TRAINED?

To Hyper,
Congrats on such an excellent mag, it kicks ass. I wrote in conduction with my Playstation. I switched it on 3 hours after receiving it and was totally shitting in my underwear in excitement until it didn't load my demo disk. I thought I'll try again, but it kept on asking to

put in a disk, I started to get shitty & tried again this time it worked but it stopped and looked like I paused it then it started again & started to jump. I crapped in my pants in anger & rang up Sony, my luck they were always busy. Please, please, please tell me what to do. Will Sony exchange my Playstation for another? Do your Playstations muck up?

MARK

NSW

Mark, I'd suggest finding a place that stocks a nappy in your size... A whole lotta shittin' going on at your end of things. You really should be taking the thing back to the place you bought it. I'm on my 3rd Playstation now, the first one had a problem with one of the audio sockets, and the next with the common "video skip" problem. The store I bought

mine at swapped them for a new one both times, so I don't see any reason why any other store should not do the same for you. My 3rd Playstation is now over a year old, and I've never had a problem with it at all. As long you're assertive and polite, you should not have any hassles getting a faulty console swapped for a good one, as long as it's under warranty.

WE WANT MORE GORE!

Dear Hyper,

Firstly, I gotta say ya got a great mag. Secondly, what is wrong with the people at the office of Film & Literature Classification, taking the gore out of games like *Duke 3D*? I am 12 years old and neither my friends or I are mentally disturbed by violent games. It's not like I'm going to go to school and perform fatalities

on people or pin the teacher's head to the blackboard with a nail gun. Maybe the OFLC just wants to take the fun out of games and turn everyone into a bunch of unfair idiots like John Howard (he's trying to take Ford and Holden off the market, the SOB). Anyway, I've been wanting to write to Hyper for a while so I got quite a few questions for youse:

- 1) When is *Sega Rally 2* coming out in the arcades?
- 2) What the hell is an initialization string (regarding a modem)? I've been trying to play *Quake Deathmatch* and don't know what one is.
- 3) What are some numbers for a few places I can play *Multiplayer Quake* over in Perth?
- 4) Any chance of a *Super Mario Land 4* on *Gameboy*?
- 5) Any chance of a *Daytona 2* at the arcades?

6) Do you have any idea of the price of N64 carts?

Well there, I've had my say and there's not a single whinge about who's better (Nintendo, Sega or Sony)!!!
Seeya!

NIC CHESTER

Duncraig WA

OFLC are a popular lot aren't they? Like Max said, you can always order from England. Now, your answers...

1. Haven't heard any word of a release of the game.
2. Okay, this is REALLY important for playing against a friend via modem. I'll give you a string that seems to work for most modems, for most games: **AT&K3&C1&D2**

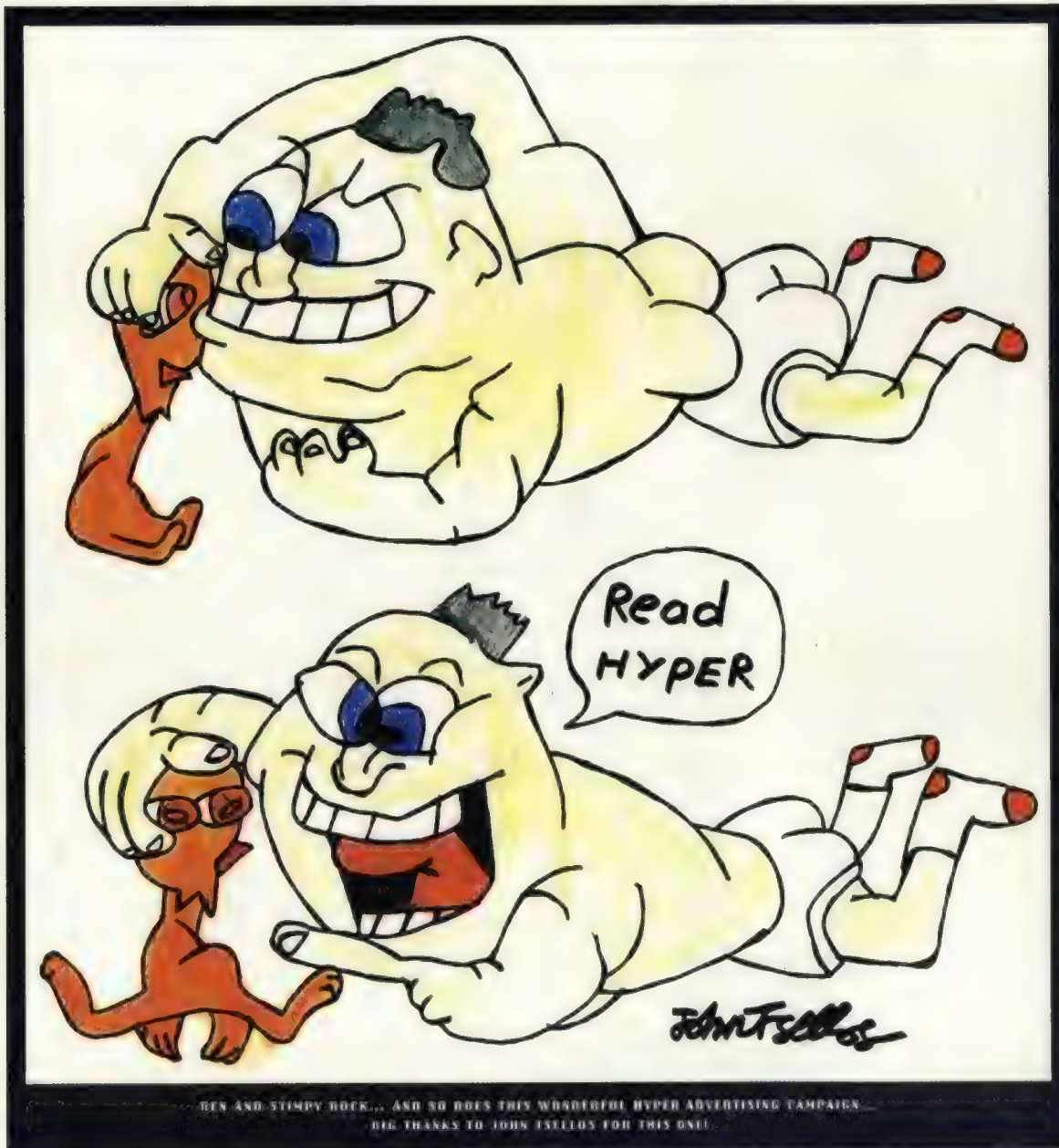
Ben Mansill and I had a one on one modem game, and it wouldn't work without us' entering that string, and apparently that's what a lot of people have to do.

3. Had a poke around on the net and came up empty I'm afraid, there probably is one, but as to how you may find it I don't know. Keep your eyes peeled on the net.
4. Anything's possible, no news from Nintendo on it though.
5. Well, *Scud Racer* is Sega's latest racing game, and I doubt you'll see another one with the name "Daytona" bunged on it.
6. Yes... Your average cart will cost \$99.95... Some will be a bit more, and some may be a bit less, but \$99.95 will be the usual price.

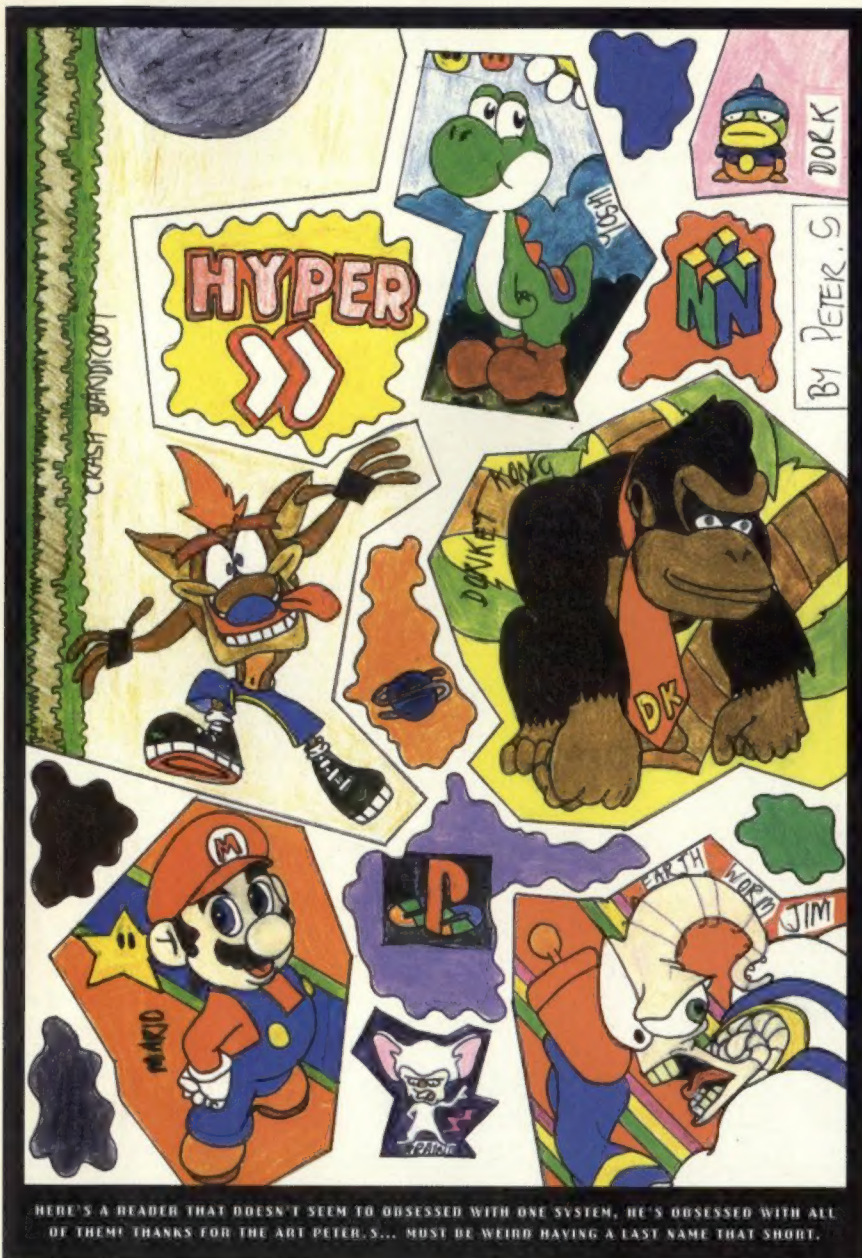
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

Dear Hyper,

With the launch of the N64 imminent (or has that passed - what's the date today?!), every Tom, Dick and Harry has put his or her word on the subject. Once and for all however, I'd like to put a few things straight about the machine itself and the cause for the delayed launch. Nintendo have had to put up with much criticism over the last two years, most of it utter rubbish. Cartridges are limited, development is low, costs are high, people are getting impatient. OK, sure, these posed problems initially, and the competition is high (although prepare for a surprise) but just take a look at the end product. A highly polished 64-bit console, with an efficient design and great capabilities. People who continue to attack Nintendo now are true idiots, highlighting their own insecurity with their machine. The initial batch of



BEN AND STIMPY ROCK... AND SO DOES THIS WONDERFUL HYPER ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN. BIG THANKS TO JOHN SELOS FOR THIS ONE!



software speaks for itself.

High quality games on launch, with many more on the way. Of course the delay was ridiculous, but hell, I'd be prepared to wait until 1998 just to get my hands on the thing. Why? Simple - not because it's 64-bit and certainly not because I'm expecting a 'paradigm leap' from existing machines. The tech-specs can go to hell. The reason is that the games promised will be some of the most FUN and ENJOYABLE in the history of console gaming. Just look at them - Super Mario 64, Mario Kart 64, Wave Race 64, F-Zero 64, DCK 64, Zelda 64, Yoshi's Island 64, Pilotwings 64. The list does not end. I guarantee that Nintendo will produce more winners in the first year, than either Sony or Sega have had in the past two. That, my friends is the reason for

the delay - the acquisition of top developers and the production of games which will blow the definition of FUN up to another level. On a final note, please lay off Nintendo. They worked damn hard to make the N64, and they don't need fools like Oliver Chau Bi (Jan '97) to keep us from having fun. God Bless Nintendo, God Bless the Dream Team, and God Bless the gaming genius Shigeru Miyamoto.

ANDREW MONTESANTI
Well, you won't have to put up with that criticism much more, since the system is out now. I wouldn't be too worried about what these people think though... Let time prove them (or yourself) wrong.

THE ANSWERING MACHINE...

Dear Hyper,
Let me start by saying what an

excellent magazine you guys put together each month. It's refreshing to see such a high quality publication being put together on our own shores. I've just got a few short questions about the Nintendo 64, and it seemed to me that you were the guys best qualified to ask them to (our cheapest anyway). Here they are:

1: I read in a British Mag that Nintendo had scrapped their territorial protection on N64 hardware and software, meaning that software from any country could be played on any machine. Is this true, or are adaptors required to play the foreign games? Will they be compatible at all?

2: What's the news on N64 DD? I don't like the sound of having to fork out another \$200 or so, in order to play great games like Zelda.

3: Are you planning to have a solid coverage of N64 news, reviews, cheats and so forth in future issues?

Thanks for you help guys and keep up the good work.

BRADLEY SIMMONS
NSW

1. There's been no word of converters yet, since the PAL machines haven't been out long enough for anyone to do one. We only have an American N64 at the time of production (we're more than a month ahead), so when we get an Aussie machine, we'll test the compatibility.
2. Well, you may have to. It might be a bit more than a disk drive though, with rumour of a modem being built into it as well.
3. No... We thought we'd just let everyone down and deal with the hate mail. Of course we are... Sheesh!

MY LIFE IS FALLING TO PIECES

Dear Hyper,
Before I start slagging off Sony, I would like to congratulate them on a great console.

I bought my PSX when they were \$700, therefore my warranty has run out. Now it had shit itself. When I turn it on, sometimes it doesn't get past the Sony Logo. Then I watch intros and it skips words every 2-3 seconds. When I play NHL 97 it freezes in 1 out of every 10 games which is highly annoying. I have tried lens cleaners, disc cleaners and everything else, but it just comes down to the fact the it is f***ed. Nine out of ten people I know are having the same problems. Sony needs to come out of it's shell and take responsibility for these problems and fix them.

In a past mag a guy got stuck into Sony about the price and one of the head guys (Michael Ephraim) replied. I hope you gaming gods at Hyper print this letter and then I'll expect a reply from Sony.

Taking all this into account, the PSX is the best console out, it just has some design faults.

Yours sincerely

CONCERNED PSX OWNER
Well, if it started having problems before your warranty ran out, then it'd be fault for not taking it back ASAP. However, if it died after the warranty was out, you're definitely up Poo Creek. If Sony want to reply, I'll bung their response in next issue. Try putting your PSX upside down and see if that helps at all. That may sound silly, but some people swear by it,

and since you're not likely to get your dosh back or anything, it can't hurt to try. There was a silly rumour going around that PlayStation with the metallic drive piece were more reliable than the black plastic ones. It was not a move by Sony to make a more secure drive, it was just a case of getting the component by a different manufacturer who made the same piece in metal for a slightly lower price.

HUH???

Deep in Space, a rip in the space, time continuum fabric opens a portal from another dimension in this one. Through the Portal, a meteorite the size of ten football fields appear, travelling fast and on a collision course with Earth.

Back on Earth news of the Meteorite and the impending Doom causes worldwide panic. Looting destruction pillaging and crime rises dramatically as societies collapse. Nintendo and Sega fanatics venture out of their bomb shelter basements and compounds and make peace (reluctantly). The N64 and it's development team disappear into another portal never to be seen again, while the Atari Jaguar goes ballistic with its sales winning the console war outright and more strange happenings.

Amid all of the chaos, a handful of people have managed to keep their cool as they race to their battlestations through the labyrinth of corridors under the Hyper offices. As they make their way to the battle room they dispatch zombies and monster movie rejects (ala Doom and DN3D).

They reach the battle room and race to their stations. Beads of sweat stand out on their brows as fingers fly over keyboards and pound joypads into dust, hellfire rockets and plasma blasts are fired almost continuously.

"Heads up!!" yells Dan T "We have incoming twelve sacks of mail from the tree line!"

"Watch out for the freaking trap!" shouts Stuart C

"Kick his head in. Rip out his guts!!" thunders George S, before laughing like a man possessed as he pulls off a triple flawless fatality.

Such is the life in the gaming industry, and when Hyper have a deadline, they conveniently forget about it until the last minute.

Keep up the good work and keep the magazines coming.

SLIDE

You sir, are a freak.



WGC
D.A. INTERNATIONAL

This is a city with a secret. The children that used to crowd its streets are vanishing one by one, and no one knows where or why they've gone.

Perhaps Miette, a streetwise kid with a knack for petty theft could be the one with the skill and cunning to solve the mystery.

But can a child survive in such a strange and fantastical city, full of dangerous characters? Is she up to such a bizarre mission?

Or, more to the point, are you?

The City of Lost Children

G 8+
CONTAINS
COARSE LANGUAGE

**PC
CD
ROM**



Ayrton Senna Kart Duel



Choose between Race Mode, Time Trial or Combat Mode via link cable to race against your friends in this graphically stunning true-to-life kart-racing game. Ayrton Senna Duel is the ultimate kart game experience!

This product is rated G.



GALAXY FIGHT

Where Man and Demon meet is where the heavens and underworld wage war. Eight battles on eight planets. Here's the hottest fighting action in the Galaxy - prepare for Hyper Battle Action!

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